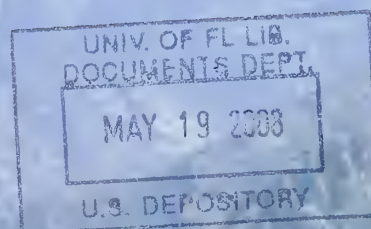


Infantry

January-February 2008



Mountain Operations

Adaptability - The Key to Success in Mountain Operations (Page 1)

**Mountain Operations:
A Historical Perspective
(Page 23)**

FLARE

MG WALTER WOJDAKOWSKI
Commandant, The Infantry School

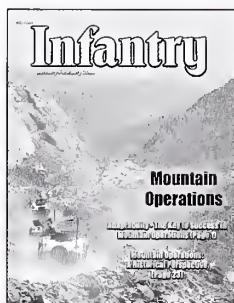
RUSSELL A. ENO
Editor

MICHELLE J. ROWAN
Deputy Editor

BETTY J. BYRD
Editorial Assistant

FRONT COVER:

Members of a provincial reconstruction team from Forward Operating Base Kalagush patrol through the mountains in the Nuristan province of Afghanistan. (Photo by SSG Michael Bracken)

**BACK COVER:**

A company commander with the 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, and his Soldiers hit the ground running in the opening salvo of Operation Patriot Strike in Ubaydi, Iraq, December 29, 2007. (Photo by SGT Ben Brody)

This medium is approved for official dissemination of material designed to keep individuals within the Army knowledgeable of current and emerging developments within their areas of expertise for the purpose of enhancing their professional development.

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

GEORGE W. CASEY, JR.
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

Official:

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Secretary of the Army
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Infantry

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2008

Volume 97, Number 1

FEATURES

- 23 MOUNTAIN OPERATIONS: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**
Russell A. Eno
- 26 MOUNTAIN OPERATIONS**
- 27 AMBUSH IN GUMBAD VALLEY**
Captain Paul A. Thomas
- 32 PLANNING FOR SUPPORT OPERATIONS IN A MOUNTAINOUS ENVIRONMENT**
Major Michael Mulherin
- 34 CONSTRUCTING A PLATOON FOB IN AFGHANISTAN**
Captain Chris O'Brien

DEPARTMENTS

- 1 COMMANDANT'S NOTE**
- 2 COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR'S CORNER**
- 3 INFANTRY NEWS**
- 11 PROFESSIONAL FORUM**
 - 11 HUMAN TERRAIN MAPPING: A CRITICAL FIRST STEP IN WINNING THE COIN FIGHT**
Lieutenant Colonel Jack Marr, Major John Cushing, Captain Brandon Garner, Captain Richard Thompson
 - 16 TEAM ENABLER: GETTING CIVIL AFFAIRS, TACTICAL PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION INTO THE FIGHT**
Captain David J. Smith and First Lieutenant Jeffrey Ritter
 - 18 LESSONS FROM THE SOVIET-AFGHAN WAR —DEH-KHWAJA AMBUSH**
 - 20 INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION AND SHARING**
Captain Timothy Hsia
- 38 TRAINING NOTES**
 - 38 A HIGHER CALLING: TRAINING CURVE IS STEEP AT THE ARMY MOUNTAIN WARFARE SCHOOL**
Bob Rosenburgh
 - 41 ISLAMIST MILITANCY AND YEMEN'S INTERNAL STRUGGLES: A LOOK AT THE WRITINGS OF YEMENI COLONEL ABD-AL-WALIAL-SHUMAIRY**
Lieutenant Commander Youssef Aboul-Enein, USN
 - 50 SMALL ARMS AMMUNITION: KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SHOOTING**
PS Magazine
- 51 BOOK REVIEWS**
- 53 SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION**

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Commandant's Note

MAJOR GENERAL WALTER WOJDAKOWSKI

ADAPTABILITY — THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN MOUNTAIN OPERATIONS

The Infantry goes after the enemy wherever he chooses to fight or to hide. For the past six years, terrorists have maintained operating bases and today are now increasingly seeking refuge in the mountains of Afghanistan. Despite the daunting challenges of the terrain, the Infantry has learned to beat the enemy at his own game. There are certain skills that require little adaptation, such as our standardized battle drills and individual soldier skills. Through repetitive practice at our home stations and during mission rehearsals in the combat zone, infantrymen continue to hone these skills to find, fix, and destroy the enemy. Under other circumstances leaders and Soldiers have quickly learned how the enemy and climate differ from what they have known and have adapted accordingly. In this Commandant's Note, I want to highlight some of the demands and challenges of mountain operations and the importance of adapting to meet the unexpected.

Today's Soldiers are learning adaptations to marksmanship, small unit tactics, casualty evacuation, indirect fire support, and resupply that will aid them in mountainous regions. Above "timberline" (11,000 feet or higher), vegetation is sparse or nonexistent, and Soldiers can see and engage targets at longer ranges. We are training snipers and our other marksmen to engage not only targets at greater ranges, but also those above and below them, where a rifleman may overshoot or undershoot. Even with the latest and best optics, range estimation becomes even more critical in the long ranges of the mountain fight, and Soldiers are learning and reinforcing this skill. The Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) is sharing a wealth of information on lessons that emerged from the 10-year Soviet-Afghan War, from Operation Anaconda in 2002, and from current mountain operations. British actions during the Falklands War in 1982 and the Eighth Army's campaign against the bitterly contested Gothic Line in 1944 all offer their own lessons on tactics and logistical operations. CALL Lessons Learned cells across the Army are gathering critical data and making it available to the entire force.

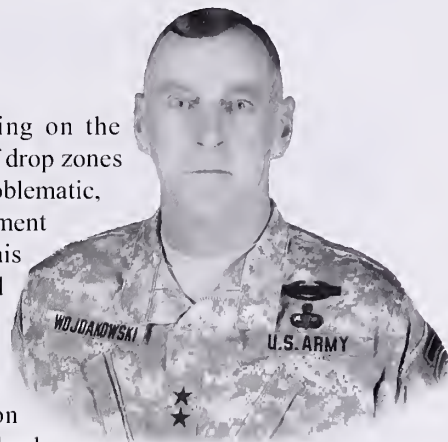
Resupplying units operating in the mountains was a challenge during both World Wars and in Korea and it is a challenge today. Units assured of reliable resupply of food, water, and ammunition can travel lighter and arrive less fatigued than those having to pack more essentials in with them. Aerial resupply is only a partial answer, however, since aircraft operating in the thinner air of higher elevations will consume more fuel, must carry smaller payloads, and must deal with unpredictable winds and visibility. Units have adapted to uncertain conditions by such measures as pre-packed contingency supplies that they can load and airdrop

on short notice. Depending on the enemy situation, securing of drop zones and landing zones may be problematic, and ultimately ground movement may be the only way, but this will mean securing roads and trails and the passes that restrict them. Resupply by ground moves slowly on ATVs, on pack animals, on hand-drawn sleds, or on the backs of men. This is where the support of the host nation population becomes critical.

The indigenous population in mountainous regions may be friendly, uncommitted or hostile, and we need to understand what has shaped their character and loyalties and what causes them to choose sides. Cultural awareness affects much that we do in the global war on terrorism, and the need for our understanding of the local tribes and communities remains constant. It enables the infantry Soldier and leader to build relationships with the local populace, yields intelligence, and helps in all aspects of the counterinsurgency fight. Region-specific cultural awareness training adapted to specific needs will remain a core element of preparing Soldiers and leaders for present and future deployments.

As we have adapted our tactics, techniques, and procedures to the global war on terrorism, manuals such as FM 3-97.6, *Mountain Operations*, and FM 3-97.61, *Military Mountaineering*, reflect current thought on how we can best operate in this dimension of warfare. It is common for a single operation in the mountains of Afghanistan to include both mounted and dismounted elements operating together. In a mountainous environment, squads and platoons may find themselves conducting patrols great distances from their supporting elements or higher headquarters with attachments such as engineers, tactical human intelligence teams, interpreters, or host nation forces. These elements may be called upon to administer first aid, detain enemy personnel, or call for indirect fire from artillery, mortars, or close air support, along with a myriad of other tasks. For our nation's continued success in this war, our Soldiers need to be able to conduct these standard tasks. These tough Soldiers are built through realistic training, and by the examples set by resourceful, adaptive leaders who can build tough, cohesive teams capable of accomplishing any mission.

We are winning the global war on terrorism because we can adapt, maintain our warrior skills, and carry the fight to the enemy. Follow me!



Command Sergeant Major's Corner

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR WILLIAM J. ULIBARRI

WINNING THE MOUNTAIN FIGHT — ADAPTABILITY AND LEADERSHIP

Infantry Soldiers prove their ability to adapt to any environment every day around the world. What enables Soldiers from Fort Wainwright, Alaska, to deploy to Iraq and experience only minor heat casualties? How does an organization from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, quickly become capable of combat operations in Afghanistan? There are a number of factors that contribute to the success of such organizations, but the individual Soldiers' ability to adapt and their junior leaders' ability to supervise and train them seem to be the most crucial. We have a variety of tools available to train properly and learn as much as possible about future operations; however, we should continue to develop our Soldiers' confidence and adaptability, and our junior leaders' leadership skills.

At the small unit level, mountain operations demand that our infantrymen hit what they shoot at. While many engagements may be at close range, mountainous terrain allows for engagements beyond our traditional qualification. The Long Range Marksmanship Course offered at Fort Benning — and available in a mobile training team format — bridges the gap between sniper training and traditional marksmanship training. Units can also leverage their trained squad designated marksmen and company snipers to develop and run training that will undoubtedly bolster other squad members' confidence and ability to engage the enemy at longer ranges. Squad leaders and team leaders can have a huge impact on their Soldiers' marksmanship by frequently confirming zeros, preferably on a known distance range, and enforcing effective weapons maintenance.

Adapting to the challenges presented by a harsh climate and altitude is not simply a matter of training, although preparatory training may accelerate adaptation. It is well documented that Soldiers who are in top physical condition adjust more easily to the rigor associated with high-altitude operations. Veterans of Operation Anaconda feel that long movements with combat load, preferably in a mountainous environment, should be the focus of physical training in preparation for mountain operations. Since few installations have such an environment, leaders must be creative when building their unit physical training plans, and should also be aware that rapid deployment from sea level to 14,000 feet has been proven to result in casualty rates of approximately 50 percent. Junior leaders, team leaders and squad leaders who supervise their Soldiers well are our most effective preventive measure against casualties associated with operating in harsh climates. Team leaders make sure Soldiers are wearing the right equipment in the proper manner and they constantly monitor each of their Soldiers for signs of heat or cold weather injury, as well as altitude sickness. Good supervision, coupled with an equally good

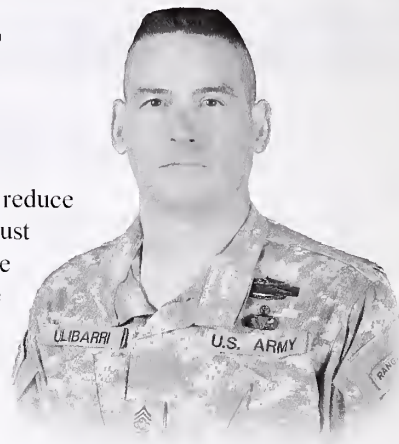
battle buddy system, will reduce casualties drastically. We must develop and practice these habits of effective supervision at home station, during everyday business; we cannot expect them to simply appear in a combat environment. The fire team

leader who constantly watches after his Soldiers when it is -30° F so they do not get frostbite will habitually make sure those same Soldiers are drinking plenty of water when it is 125°F. For other less obvious hazards, such as mountain sickness, the same leader simply needs to know the warning signs to take care of his Soldiers.

One of the most significant challenges infantry fire teams, squads and platoons face when operating in mountainous terrain are those associated with isolation. Mountain warfare is typically decentralized, making it a junior leader fight. Inclement weather and the enemy always have a vote and when they do, resupply fails, communications go bad, casualties increase, and the small unit is alone. Infantry squads who deal well with some or all of these variables do so because their leaders at all levels effectively cross-train those Soldiers. Privates graduating Infantry One Station Unit Training all receive combat lifesaver training, and the percentage of those who earn certification is steadily increasing. Units are training those same privates on tasks associated with calling for and adjusting indirect fire, unit resupply, and other tasks that have traditionally been trained to Soldiers of a higher skill level. Some organizations are even sending privates first class to the Warrior Leaders Course, grooming them to be team leaders ahead of their peers. The result is a better trained infantryman, who can not only do the job of others in his squad but also many of the tasks we normally rely on our medic, fire supporter, or communications specialist to do.

While many of the challenges encountered in mountain operations are unique, the ability to lead and adapt to those challenges is not. The leadership skills our junior leaders develop are crucial in preparing for operations in any environment. Our infantry fire team leaders, squad leaders, platoon sergeants, and platoon leaders make the difference because they recognize the crucial challenges associated with new situations, and they respond by training their Soldiers to meet those challenges. Adaptable leaders develop Soldiers who are not uncomfortable in new and constantly changing conditions, conditions where the Infantry has always led the way — and always will.

Follow me!



Infantry News



New Sniper System Designed for Urban Fight

PEO SOLDIER

Soldiers deploying have just received a weapon that will dramatically improve sniper operations. The new M110 Semi-Automatic Sniper System (SASS), approved for full materiel release in August, is now in the hands of snipers from Fort Polk, Louisiana. The mid-November fielding represents the first time the weapon has been fielded before deployment.

MAJ Marc Meeker, Assistant Product Manager for Soldier Weapons — the Program Executive Office (PEO) Soldier office responsible for the weapon's acquisition — was on hand for the milestone.

"Our focus is to try to get this weapon fielded to units prior to their deployment," he said, stressing the Army's commitment to providing comprehensive training and the best equipment to its Soldiers. "We don't want to field in theater. We would rather train in a peacetime environment, and have Soldiers equipped with the best and newest equipment as they go forward on the battlefield."

After the Soldiers at Fort Polk spent some time getting acquainted with the M110, they deemed the weapon a great improvement over its predecessor, the M24.

"It's everything a sniper wants," one sergeant said. "We're all very excited about this new weapon system because it's custom-tailored to the kind of fight we're in."

That environment — typically an urban one — stands in stark contrast to the terrain the sergeant faced in his prior deployment. "It's a very target-rich environment for them over there," MAJ Meeker noted, "and they have to be very selective about their targets."

One of the major improvements that will help in that environment is the higher-



PEO Soldier photos

The new M110 Semi-Automatic Sniper System (SASS), approved for full materiel release in August, is now in the hands of snipers from Fort Polk, Louisiana. The mid-November fielding represents the first time the weapon has been fielded before deployment.

rate of fire, allowing snipers to target insurgents accurately and quickly in civilian-dense areas. This has been achieved by replacing the M24's bolt-action system and internal five-round magazine with quickly detachable high-capacity box magazines. Another essential upgrade is the flash/sound suppressor.

The M110 also can eliminate unnecessary baggage when snipers must switch gears to engage the enemy in close-quarters. According to SSG Aaron W., "I don't have to have my shooter carry an extra weapon when we go into buildings to clear rooms. He can actually use (the M110). That's going to lighten our load a lot."

In addition to these features, the M110 includes a 3.5-10x power variable rifle scope, and MIL-STD-1913 Picatinny rail, which allows the



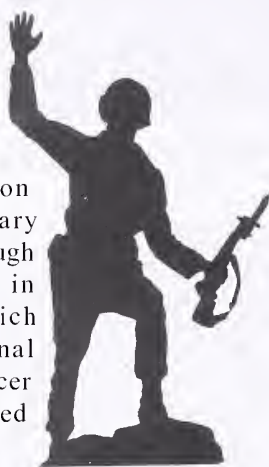
Soldiers become familiarized with the new M110 Semi-Automatic Sniper System at Fort Polk, Louisiana.

weapon to be tailored with rail-mountable accessories such as the AN/PVS-26 clip-on night sight, which was also fielded at Fort Polk.

PEO Soldier is responsible for virtually everything the Soldier wears or carries. More information on weapons and other PEO Soldier programs can be found at www.peosoldier.army.mil.

USAIS ANNOUNCES 2008 WRITING CONTEST

The purpose of the 2008 U.S. Army Infantry School Professional Writing Contest is to stimulate discussion and the dissemination of information relevant to the contemporary operational environment through the publication of articles in *Infantry Magazine* which contribute to the professional development of officers, officer candidates, NCOs, and enlisted Soldiers.



Eligibility:

The USAIS Professional Writing Contest is open to anyone, civilian or of any military rank, including Maneuver Captains' Career Course (MCCC) and Maneuver Advanced NCO Course (M-ANCOC) and other commissioned and noncommissioned USAIS students wanting to share their experience in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, or on other deployments with Soldiers serving in the global war on terrorism.

Submission Criteria:

Each entrant should submit an unclassified, original paper on any subject. Some suggested topics appear at Figure 1, although other topics relevant to current operations in the global war on terrorism may be acceptable as well. Magazine issue themes for FY 08 are listed in Figure 2. Papers should be between 2,000 and 4,000 words. Submit slides and line art as Microsoft Office PowerPoint files, with photographs submitted as jpeg or tif files. We will not accept copyrighted art or photographs without written permission of the copyright holder, and it is the responsibility of the entrant to obtain such permission. Each entry must include a completed submission form, Figure 3. The article should be a double-spaced Word document in 12 point Times New Roman font.

Prizes and recognition:

First Place: Award of \$300, a Certificate of Achievement signed by the Chief of Infantry, publication in *Infantry Magazine*, and a year's subscription to *Infantry Magazine*.

Second Place: Award of \$150, a Certificate of Achievement signed by the Chief of Infantry, publication in *Infantry Magazine*, and a year's subscription to *Infantry Magazine*.

Third Place: Award of \$50, a Certificate of

Figure 1 — Suggested Topics

- **Information operations in the contemporary operational environment** — What is the enemy doing, what are we doing? How are the print and broadcast media affecting our efforts, or how might they be assisting our adversaries? Impressions of the impact of our media on host nation people are useful, too.
- **Intelligence gathering in stability operations** — What essential elements should we be looking for, and what should we be denying the enemy?
- **Military transition training** — What have been our successes, what did not work as well as we had hoped? Comparisons between today's MiTT initiatives and our advisory efforts in Vietnam.
- **Lawrence of Arabia** — What can we learn from him? What lessons did he learn, and how are they relevant nine decades later? What did Vo Nguyen Giap learn from him, and how well did he apply it?
- **Counterinsurgency** — How does today's COIN relate to other insurgencies such as the British experience in Malaya, the Mau Mau rebellion, or Vietnam?
- **The asymmetric environment and its effect on small unit leadership** — Are we teaching our company grades what they need to know?
- **Mountain operations** — How do today's operations differ in light of those in World War II? Where do we stand in comparison to our allies with experience in fighting in the clouds? What can we learn from the Germans, Italians, Greeks, Indians, Pakistanis, and Russians?
- **Combatives** — Are we training enough, and how effective is what we teach proving to be on the ground in GWOT?
- **Cultural awareness** — How have our training initiatives worked? Have we learned enough about other cultures, and how can we introduce them to our own way of life and help them better understand why we do the things we do?
- **Dismounted operations and the urban fight** — What have we learned, and what has our enemy learned? Are we losing our edge on mounted operations as we adapt to a new enemy on new terrain?
- **OPSEC** — Are we as aware of it as we should be, and where do our weaknesses lie?

Achievement signed by the Chief of Infantry, publication in *Infantry Magazine*, and a year's subscription to *Infantry Magazine*.

Evaluation and Judging:

A board of subject matter experts chosen from within the USAIS staff and faculty will screen and evaluate all submissions, select the top three, and rank order them according to standards of relevance to current and future operations in the global war on terrorism; technical accuracy; original thought; and adherence to the Army Writing Style.

Contest Milestones:

Entries and submission forms due to Editor, *Infantry Magazine*, by December 31, 2008.

Mail to: *Infantry Magazine*

ATTN: Editor

P.O. Box 52005

Fort Benning, GA 31995-2005

In addition to a hard copy of the article and submission form, please include a disk or CD with the files a well.

Winners will be announced in the May-June 2009 issue.

OPSEC:

We cannot accept any entries containing classified or sensitive material. Entrants are responsible for having their entries screened by their security managers or public affairs personnel prior to submission, and will attach a statement to the submission sheet indicating that the screening has been completed.

Biography:

Entrants should submit a 1-2 page biography which covers military and civilian education, rank, last three assignments, and — for officers — source of commission.

For more information about the contest, contact the magazine staff through one of the following methods:

E-mail — russell.eno@us.army.mil.

Telephone — (706) 545-2350/6951 or DSN 835-2350/6951

Web site — www.infantry.army.mil/magazine (will need to enter AKO login and password)

Figure 2 — *Infantry Magazine* Themes for FY 2008

November-December 2007 — Military Transition Teams

January-February 2008 — Mountain Operations

March-April 2008 — Urban Operations

May-June 2008 — Cultural Awareness

July-August 2008 — Counterinsurgency

September- October 2008 — Training Tomorrow's Infantrymen

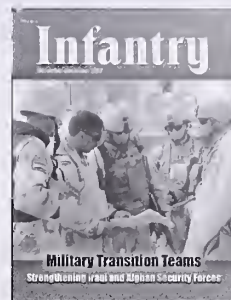


Figure 3 — Submission Form (This form is also available online at <https://www.infantry.army.mil/magazine>)

MEMORANDUM FOR: Editor, *Infantry Magazine*

SUBJECT: The 2008 USAIS Professional Writing Contest

1. Attached is my entry for the 2008 Professional Writing Contest.

2. The subject of my paper is _____.

3. This research paper is my original work. I have properly attributed all material drawn from other sources and no part of it has been plagiarized. It has not been previously published in this form, nor is it currently under consideration for publication in any magazine other than *Infantry*. It has not been entered in any writing contest other than this one.

4. I understand that, whether or not it is selected as a winner, the United States Army Infantry School may reproduce it for instructional purposes, and *Infantry Magazine* will have first right of publication without copyright restrictions.

5. This paper has been screened by a security manager or public affairs officer to ensure that it does not contain classified or other material in violation of operational security (OPSEC) guidelines.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Title / Organization _____

SOLDIERS CONFIDENT IN M4 DESPITE TEST

J.D. LEIPOLD

In a test conducted last month under extreme conditions, the M4 carbine had just over one of every 100 rounds jam in the weapon or magazine. A recent survey, though, indicated that an overwhelming majority of Soldiers who have used the M4 in combat have high confidence in the weapon.

At a Pentagon media roundtable December 17, the Army addressed the results of the M4 carbine Extreme Dust Test III conducted in November. The test had been scrutinized by Senator Tom Coburn of Oklahoma after the M4 finished last of four weapons in the technical testing.

The M4 was put through technical rigors along with the XM-8 lightweight assault rifle, the MK-16 combat assault rifle and the HK-416 carbine in a series of extreme technological performance tests designed to push the four weapons systems to failure and to identify their boundaries.

The four weapons were first subjected to 25 hours of constant, heavy dusting in laboratory conditions at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, "in an environment not commonly found, if ever, in an operational environment," said BG Mark Brown, commander of Program Executive Office Soldier and the Natick Soldier Systems Center, who stressed the test was not an operational examination. "Extreme dust test does not replicate any typical Soldier use or operational condition."

The general stressed the test did not address reliability in any typical operational condition, nor did it test weapons part service life or life-cycle maintenance costs or any other aspect of weapons effectiveness, such as suitability, survivability or other reliability and performance other than technical reports in extreme dust conditions.

After being exposed to the heavy dusting, 10 of each weapon fired 6,000 rounds apiece. They were fired in 50 120-round cycles. Each was then wiped and re-lubricated at the 600-round mark. After 1,200 rounds were fired from each weapon, they were fully cleaned and relubricated — far less often than would have occurred in the operational field where Soldiers typically clean and lube their weapons after each mission, even if their weapons have not been fired.

"While the M4 finished fourth out of four, 98 percent of all the rounds fired from it went off down range as they were supposed to do," BG Brown said. "However, the three other candidates did perform better at about a 99 percent rate or better, which is a mathematically statistically significant difference, but not an operationally statistical difference."

Even with extreme dust test III's 98.6 percent success rate there was a total of 863 class 1 and 2 weapon/magazine stoppages with 19 class 3 stoppages. During extreme dust test II conducted during the summer, there were 296 total class 1 and 2 stoppages and 11 class 3 stoppages. A class 1 stoppage is one a Soldier can clear



PEO Soldier

A technician at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, puts a heavily dusted M4 carbine through a series of firing tests.

within 10 seconds; a class 2 stoppage is one a Soldier can clear, but requires more than 10 seconds; and, a class 3 is a stoppage that requires an armorer to clear.

"One of the concerns we had about the test and what drove us to this news conference is that the test was still under analysis when we started getting external questions about it," BG Brown said. "At this stage of analysis of the test results, this is very early preliminary feedback. We don't know what caused the differences in performance between dust test II and dust test III.

"The tests were undertaken at different times of the year; they were taken under different humidity conditions — it's not a humidity controlled chamber; the tests were undertaken by different crews, so we're in the process of evaluating why the big disparity between the tests," he said. "Still, we're talking about a 98-percent performance rate with no stoppages. The M4 carbine is a world-class weapon, and the Soldier feedback on that weapon since the war began is that they have a high confidence level in the M4."

The Army has put an option on an existing contract for 64,450 M4s, according to the general.

In a recent survey conducted by the Center of Naval Analysis, 917 Soldiers who have used the M4 carbine in combat reported an 89 percent overall satisfaction in the weapon. A total of 734 or 80 percent reported confidence that the M4 will fire without malfunction in combat; and 81 percent did not experience a stoppage while engaging the enemy. Three percent who experienced a stoppage reported an inability to engage the enemy during a significant portion or the entire firefight after performing immediate or remedial action to clear the stoppage, while only 1 percent, or 12 Soldiers felt the M4 should be replaced.

NEWS BRIEFS

Firing Table Updates Available —

The Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center (ARDEC) Firing Tables and Ballistics Division announces the availability of FT 60-P-1 Change 16. The updated table can be downloaded from the FTaB Mortar Tabular Firing Tables AKO page at the link <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/9725298>.

USAMU Needs Pistol Shooters —

The U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning, Georgia, is looking for a few good shooters.

The highly competitive unit is putting out its annual call for Soldiers who are interested in competing in pistol competitions in the summer of 2008.

Soldiers in the rank of staff sergeant and below with fewer than 15 years of service who obtain approval from their commanders can travel to Fort Benning in April at the expense of the marksmanship unit to participate in the initial training. The Soldiers are trained

in advanced marksmanship skills.

Once that is complete, pistol team officials will select shooters to participate in the Interservice Championships in June and the National Matches in July.

After the three-month tour, Soldiers return to their units with invaluable marksmanship training that can be harvested by unit trainers to improve the marksmanship skills of their Soldiers.

Soldiers who are interested in the developmental pistol shooter program can contact SFC Jason M. St. John at (706) 545-7022 or 545-3893 or DSN 835-7022 or e-mail Jason.StJohn@usaac.army.mil.

Reunions Set — The **Society of the First Infantry Division**, veterans of the Army's "Big Red One," will hold its 90th annual reunion August 20-24 in Colorado Springs, Colorado, at the Crowne Plaza.

For more information, visit the society's Web site at www.1stID.org, e-mail Soc1ID@aol.com, or call (888) 324-4733.

The **45th Infantry Division**

(**Thunderbirds**) will hold its reunion September 25-27 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. For more information, contact Raul Trevino at (210) 681-9134 or 2145 NE Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73111.

Wear-out Date Set for BDUs — The Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for G-I (Personnel) announced that the final wear-out date for the Army Battle Dress Uniform and Desert Battle Dress Uniform will be April 30 for both active-duty and reserve-component Soldiers.

The Army began phasing out the woodland and desert-patterned uniforms on June 14, 2004, with debut of the digital-patterned Army Combat Uniform.

All brown T-shirts, black combat boots and green and black jungle boots, woodland and desert-camouflage caps, olive-drab-green name and U.S. Army tapes, subdued-olive-green shoulder-sleeve insignias and the black rigger belt and web belt with open-faced black buckle will also become obsolete on April 30.

NEW AMMO WILL DECREASE RICOCHET HAZARDS

DARRYL HOWLETT

A new type of ammunition is arriving in time to help Soldiers in dangerous urban landscapes, such as those in Iraq.

BG James E. Rogers, commanding general of the Joint Munitions Command at Rock Island, Illinois, approved the full materiel release of the M-1030 12-gauge shotgun breaching cartridge in late 2007.

"The M-1030 is an anti-material cartridge designed to be used for defeating wooden doors (deadbolts, knobs and hinges) and padlock hasps," said R. Ned DeWitt, product manager of crew served weapons with the Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center. "The cartridge is functional with the Mossberg 500/590 and the Remington 870 shotguns. The cartridges will be tested in the XM62 Modular Accessory Shotgun System as part of the product qualification testing for the weapon."

DeWitt said changes in combat from open field to urban



SSG Antonieta Rico

The M-1030 is designed to minimize ricochet hazards associated with buckshot breaching.

environments drove the implementation for the changes.

"Since combat has migrated toward military operations in urban terrain, ballistic-breaching operations have increased. This necessitated the need for a specialized breaching munition capable of being fired from existing and future small arms weapons," he said.

The most important aspect of the new munition is its safety toward Soldiers.

"Current shotgun-ballistic breaching utilized 00 Buckshot cartridges that are not designed for breaching," DeWitt said. "Soldiers have suffered severe

injuries during breaching operations utilizing buckshot cartridges," he said. "The frangible projectile of the M-1030 minimizes ricochet hazards currently associated with buckshot breaching and provides a much safer alternative to the Soldier."

(Darryl Howlett is assigned to the U.S. Army Joint Munitions Command Public Affairs Office.)

HUMAN TERRAIN TEAM HELPS SOLDIERS IN IRAQ UNDERSTAND CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

SERGEANT MIKE PRYOR

On a bright afternoon, Professor Dave Matsuda traveled with a group of U.S. Soldiers to tour a food distribution depot in the Ur neighborhood of Iraq. The Soldiers were worried about how to keep the depot from being infiltrated by Moqtada Al Sadr's Shi'ite militia army, which controls that part of the Iraqi capital.

The chief of security at the depot, however, assured them the warehouse was safe, because his "organization" protected it from Sadr's influence.

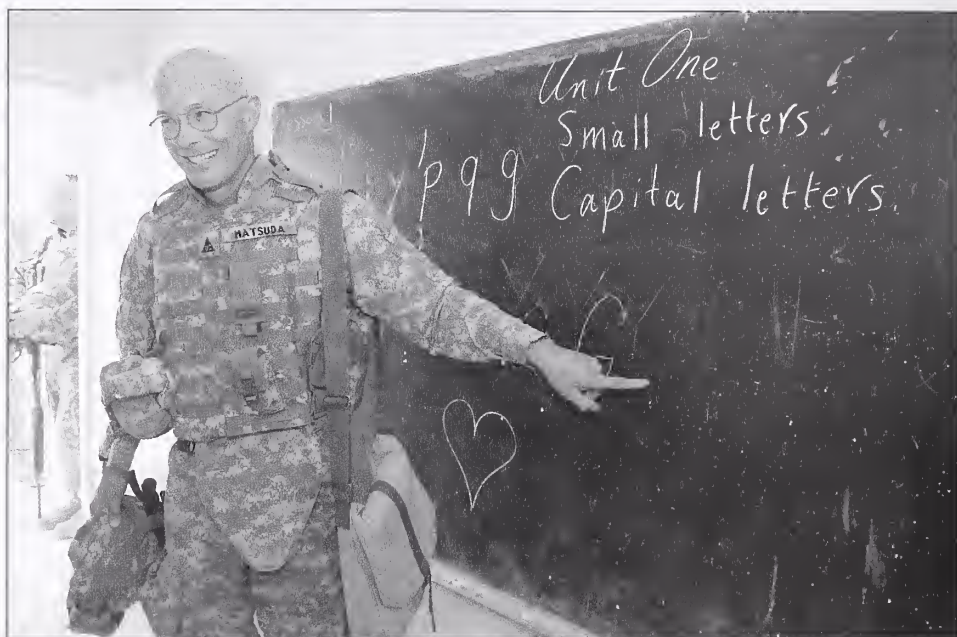
The Soldiers were doubtful the warehouse was safe. The chief's independence seemed inexplicable given what they knew about the area — it was a puzzling anomaly in a sea of data pointing in the other direction. Prof. Matsuda, though, believed he could put the pieces of the puzzle together.

He began asking the chief questions about his family, his extended family, his tribe, and the tribe's affiliations with other tribes. Later, he was able to chart the relationships on a diagram to show how the chief's tribal hierarchy operated, giving the Soldiers a rare glimpse into the complicated inner workings of Iraqi society.

It was a valuable insight drawn not from standard military intelligence gathering techniques, but from the science of anthropology.

"A military person would say 'Let's look at this in political or military terms,'" Prof. Matsuda said, "but an anthropologist says, 'Let's look at the tribal relationships underneath everything.'"

There's a reason Prof. Matsuda knows what an anthropologist would look for: he is one. Back home, Prof. Matsuda teaches at California State University, East Bay. He holds a double doctorate in anthropology and developmental psychology. Tall, soft-spoken, and bespectacled, he fits the image of the bookish professor perfectly. But these



SGT Mike Pryor

Dave Matsuda, a professor of anthropology working as a cultural analyst with the Human Terrain Team, returns to his teaching roots while playfully instructing a class during a visit to a school in Baghdad's Sadr City.

days, Prof. Matsuda has traded in his professor's tweeds for combat boots and a bulletproof vest. In September, he brought his expertise to Iraq as part of a small group of cultural experts called the Human Terrain Team (HTT), which is attached to the 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team operating in northeast Baghdad and Sadr City.

The HTT's mission is to diagram Iraq's cultural landscape — its "human terrain" — in the same way intelligence analysts map out Iraq's cities, roads, and rivers. It's a function that has become increasingly important as the U.S. military has turned its focus to counterinsurgency operations, in which cultural understanding is the key and knowing the human terrain is absolutely essential, said the team's leader, LTC Edward Villacres.

The Team

The 2nd BCT's Human Terrain Team

uses history and social science to provide cultural awareness that supports the brigade's operations, LTC Villacres pointed out.

HTT consists of the team chief, an area specialist, a social scientist, and a research manager. Prof. Matsuda, the social scientist, is a civilian, while the other members are active-duty Army with specialized knowledge. All team members have specialized knowledge specific to their HTT jobs.

"We've got people who know the culture in and out," said 1LT Sami Tioni, the team's research manager and a native Arabic speaker.

To accomplish its mission, the team draws on two pools of knowledge: information that has already been collected and information the team members collect themselves. They then analyze the information and present their conclusions and advice to the brigade commander.

"It gives him an additional level of

insight as he prepares to make decisions," LTC Villacres said.

Officials with the 2nd BCT said they appreciate the contributions the HTT has made to the brigade's operations so far.

"They add a critical dimension to the fight, one that has been missing up to now," said LTC David Oclander, the 2nd BCT's executive officer.

Outside the military, however, the teams have sparked some controversy. Much of the opposition has come from people in the academic world, who, according to Prof. Matsuda, fear the Army will misuse the knowledge offered by social scientists.

"Some are saying anthropology can't be part of the Army without being corrupted," he said.

Prof. Matsuda said some of the concerns are valid, and some are motivated by knee-jerk antimilitarism. Regardless, he said, the stakes are too high in Iraq right now to sit on the sidelines.

Knowing the Script

Even though Operation Iraqi Freedom is in its fifth year, LTC Villacres said many in the U.S. military still fail to appreciate the differences between Arab and Western culture.

"Arab society doesn't have any of the common foundations we have," he said.

As a result, it can be difficult for Iraqis and U.S. Soldiers to find common ground, despite good intentions on both sides. Prof. Matsuda gave as an example an instance where U.S. Soldiers thought they had settled a dispute with people in a village by making a condolence payment. But when the Soldiers returned a few days after making the payment, they were attacked. The Soldiers thought they had been betrayed, but in the villagers' eyes, the agreement had never been valid because the traditional reconciliation ritual hadn't been conducted, Prof. Matsuda explained.

Anthropologists believe all societies operate according to a certain "script," Prof. Matsuda said. Iraqis have one script, Americans have another. The HTT's mission is to provide an interpretation of the Iraqi cultural script that will help Soldiers make the right decisions.

The team has carried out that task in ways both small and large. One small way they affected operations came when the brigade was about to put out a wanted poster featuring an image of the scales of justice. Prof. Matsuda pointed out the idea behind the scales of justice was a Greek-derived, Western concept that meant nothing to Iraqis. Instead he proposed changing the poster to show two open hands — an image drawn from ideas in the Quran — in order to make it more resonant with Iraqis.

We try to find the assumptions and motivations behind what people do," the professor said.

Why it Matters

1LT Tioni said the value of insights the HTT offers shouldn't be underestimated.

"We fight an enemy who is very fluid, and the only way we're going to defeat them is by knowing the culture," he said.

The team's work isn't simply an academic exercise, team members said. 1LT Tioni said he is convinced greater cultural awareness will help protect Soldiers out on the streets and knowing how to interact with the population is what's going to save lives.

In justifying his work in Iraq, Prof. Matsuda returned to the example of the Soldiers who were attacked even after making a condolence payment because they didn't understand the importance of cultural traditions.

"I don't want those guys going into that village thinking they got it all taken care of and they end up getting shot," Prof. Matsuda said. "I want everyone to come home."

(SGT Mike Pryor serves with 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs.)

AMBUSH ALLEY:

THE ROAD TO ZEROK COP

SPECIALIST MICAH E. CLARE

ZEROK COMBAT OUTPOST, Afghanistan — It is known to coalition forces as "Ambush Alley."

Despite the imminent threat of attack by insurgent fighters along the winding, narrow road surrounded by steep hills and large rocks on the way to Zerok Combat Outpost (COP) in northern Paktika province, nothing can deter the courage of the paratroopers of 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team.

Army SSG Timothy Hamilton, a mortar team squad leader in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, from St. Petersburg, Florida, remembers one such attack on August 27, a day he will never forget.

The HHC convoy was moving from Forward Operating Base Orgun-E to Zerok COP on a mission to secure a nearby pass while the battalion command group convoy traveled through.

Just as the HHC convoy stopped to send a dismounted team into the hills, the attack began.

SSG Hamilton stepped out of the passenger side of his vehicle to set up a mortar firing position with his Soldiers, when he heard a roaring noise somewhere behind him.

"I heard a big explosion," he said. "I whirled around just in time to see a [rocket propelled grenade] impact into the truck behind me. I immediately jumped back in my truck."

On cue, a hail of small arms fire came raining down on the convoy from that direction, and the gunners went into action immediately.

"My gunner opened fire with the [M-240b

Continued on Page 10



SPC Micah E. Clare

Paratroopers from the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry Regiment, patrol through Ambush Alley in Paktika province, Afghanistan.

machine gun],” SSG Hamilton said. “The enemy firing positions were so close though; his machine gun broke down after it was directly hit three to four times, so he switched to his M-4 and emptied about six magazines at the attackers.”

This was when SPC Dillon Bergstad, a .50 caliber machine gunner from North Bend, Oregon, took a round through his upper arm while firing from the company commander’s vehicle.

“Suddenly I was knocked down,” SPC Bergstad said. “It felt like somebody pushed me over, and I fell back into the truck. When I got back up, I looked around, but didn’t see anything at first, so I thought nothing had happened.”

He kept firing and remembers killing several enemy fighters at close range.

As the convoy started moving forward to get away from the side attack, they started taking even heavier contact from the front. Four RPGs hit the company commander’s truck.

“Every time we stopped, another pane of armored glass was

‘spider webbing’ as round after round cracked against it,” SPC Bergstad said. “I couldn’t believe the intensity of this attack, they just wouldn’t stop coming. These guys weren’t joking around.”

SSG Hamilton, back in his vehicle, felt something hit him in the back of his helmet.

“It felt like a jackhammer,” he said. “It slammed my head down, and right about then, I heard another thump and (felt) a searing heat on my neck.”

Two rounds had punched through his truck. One had hit his helmet and another had grazed his neck. He could see a dent on the floor where that bullet had missed his thigh by inches and hit the floorboard.

It was during this time, that the first sergeant’s gunner, PFC Thomas Wilson of Maurertown, Virginia, was killed.

Even though the loss of their teammate was awful, the rest of the platoon still had to concentrate on getting out alive, SSG Hamilton said.

“We just couldn’t believe it,” SSG Hamilton said. “In the moment, you kind of have to forget about it and just focus.”

The attackers retreated after about 10 minutes of sustained gunfire and the Paratroopers quickly worked to tow the severely damaged trucks and bring everyone back to Zerok COP. Three vehicles needed to be towed back, and the other vehicles had broken glass, blown out tires and other damage.

Once there, both SSG Hamilton and SPC Bergstad were treated by medics, who were amazed to find their wounds very minor.

SSG Hamilton had barely escaped having his neck pierced and his thigh penetrated; SPC Bergstad had a bullet lodged just under the skin near his bicep, which was easily removed with little damage.

“I realize I could have lost my dome,” SSG Hamilton said. “I was incredibly lucky.”

In his three deployments, SSG Hamilton, a husband and father of two, says this is the worst ambush he’s ever been in. He was able to count 34 bullet strikes on his truck, including the two above his head that nearly killed him.

Three days later, the HHC convoy was mission ready once again, patrolling on the way back to FOB Orgun-E.

Since August, the 1-503rd Paratroopers have made many more trips through ambush alley and have been attacked on most of them.

It doesn’t make any difference to the 173rd “Sky Soldiers” though.

Sometimes SSG Hamilton looks up at the bullet holes above his head, and sees the sunlight shining through them.

“When I see those holes, I think to myself, ‘a few more inches,’” he said. “It would have been a completely different story.”

Despite the loss of a comrade, he still knows they have a job to do.

“We’ll just keep rolling through,” he said.

SPC Bergstad, looking over the ambush site from his turret, says he now sits a little lower in his seat than before.

“Still, somebody’s got to patrol this area,” he said. “It might as well be us.”

(SPC Micah E. Clare is assigned to the 4th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Office.)



HUMAN TERRAIN MAPPING

A Critical First Step in Winning the COIN Fight

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JACK MARR
MAJOR JOHN CUSHING
CAPTAIN BRANDON GARNER
CAPTAIN RICHARD THOMPSON

According to counterinsurgency doctrine, the struggle for a population's support is the core of the COIN fight. In order to truly get to know the population, you must really understand it. One could argue that the U.S. military was not attuned to this at the outset of Operation Iraqi Freedom, but Soldiers and leaders with the experience of multiple rotations in Iraq and Afghanistan do understand and actively accept these two ideas as central to our current fight. The population is the center of gravity and must be considered first in everything we do. The key to success is finding ways to separate the insurgents from the population. Therefore, it is critical that we understand the human terrain in which we operate. The important question is no longer "why" or "if" we need this information — but "how" we gather it. How does a tactical-level military unit amass the necessary information about the area in which it operates?

Task Force 1-15 Infantry (TF Dragon), part of the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division from Fort Benning, Georgia, inherited an area southeast of Baghdad during Operation Iraqi Freedom V that had not seen a consistent Coalition presence in nearly two years. The

operational environment (OE) the task force faced straddled a Sunni/Shia sectarian fault-line with the majority of the Sunnis living along the Tigris River (our western boundary) and Shia areas in the north (close to Baghdad) and the east (along the Baghdad-Al Kut highway). The information gap between what we knew and what we needed to know was fairly significant. In order to fill this gap, the entire battalion began focusing on the systematic collection of information about

the people in our assigned area of operations (AO) through a process we described as human terrain mapping (HTM). As a result of conducting HTM, TF 1-15 IN was able to better understand the population, gain the trust of local leaders, and demonstrate our commitment to local communities. This, in turn, led to the development of actionable intelligence on insurgent activities, the construction of a biometric census of military-age males, and improved security.



Photos by SGT Timothy Kingston

Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, question a group of Iraqi men during a mission in Salman Pak, Iraq.

The Importance of Having a Human Terrain Map

The center of gravity in all counterinsurgency operations is the population; controlling the population is essential to the isolation/dislocation of insurgents. Isolating the insurgents facilitates a unit's efforts to deal effectively with both the enemy (through lethal targeting) and the local population (through non-lethal targeting). This enables units to drive a wedge between the insurgents and the population within which they hide. At the tactical level of this fight, this is the critical action. Developing a human terrain map of the task force AO was the best way we found to enable this control of the population, defined in FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, as "determining who lives in an area and what they do." In simple terms, a human terrain map outlines who the players are.

As any veteran, leader or student of this war recognizes, insurgents hold the upper hand with their better understanding of local customs and politics, their ability to speak the language, their freedom of movement within the society, and their better comprehension of the population's interests. Unfortunately, the enemy in this war does not wear a uniform; this war comes without a program outlining the players.

In the preparation for our current combat tour, the leadership of TF 1-15 looked hard at the examples of units that were enjoying success on the battlefields of Iraq. Overwhelmingly, the units that seemed to be winning the fight had made significant inroads with local leaders and found proactive ways to understand and respect local cultural norms and address specific community needs. Although we recognized and understood this lesson, when we arrived in our AO, we found that very little of this data had been collected, and the information that was available was spread out across the continuity files of nearly every staff section. Furthermore, when we tried early on to verify the information, we found that people had moved, opinions had changed, and — in many cases — not much was known.

Therefore, the task force commanders and staff outlined a plan by which we could capture the human terrain mapping information in a medium that all Soldiers could monitor and understand. Once the formatting and baseline information requirements were set, we leveraged the shared situational awareness enhancing capabilities of the command post of the future (CPOF) to maintain a visual database. Each company in TF 1-15 IN was allocated a CPOF to post the results of their human terrain mapping. Each company identified the following data points about their AO: religious boundaries, key economic structures, mosques and sheiks. When incidents occur in specific areas, all companies could then plot the location and contact the local sheik to gain intelligence or ask critical questions.

We saw the first step of the counterinsurgency fight as determining the human dynamics of a particular area. We identified each tribe, town, city or village within which the enemy may seek refuge. We determined who supported the insurgents and what their needs and wants were. In essence, a human terrain map is the physical manifestation or tool to collect and catalog cultural and ethnographical information encapsulated in the historical counterinsurgency principle of "Understanding the Environment."



CPT Richard Thompson of B Company, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, talks with a group of concerned local citizens during a mission November 21, 2007.

Defining Tactical Human Terrain Mapping

The human terrain mapping effort that TF 1-15 began in the early summer of 2007 was a deliberate process designed to gain ethnographic information about our operating environment. With nearly 400,000 people in the Dragon AO and little Coalition presence within the past couple years, the requirement for this ethnographic information was great. In order to accomplish this, we planned and executed a deliberate process of decentralized patrols to answer specific questions about the population we secured. The goal was to answer specific information requirements (IR) about each separate village and town. These IR included:

- Defining (graphically) each tribal area (with specific attention to where they adjoined or overlapped with neighboring tribes)
- Location and contact information for each sheik or village muhktar and any other important people (government officials, Iraqi Security Forces [ISF], etc.)
- Location of mosques, schools, and areas of commerce/markets
- Identification of the population's battle rhythm or pattern of life (when do they wake up/sleep/shop/etc.)
- Nearest ISF locations/checkpoints
- Economic driving force/employment (how do they earn a living?)
- Employment/unemployment levels
- Are people moving out of the AO or moving in?
- Anti-coalition presence and/or activities
- Access to essential services (fuel, water, emergency care, fire response, etc.)
- Local population concerns/issues

HTM information was gathered by platoon-level combat patrols, conducted during daylight hours. To avoid pattern-setting and predictability, companies planned these terrain mapping missions in a systematic, yet unpredictable to the enemy, pattern. In this way, all areas would be covered without telegraphing to the insurgents which areas might be visited next. For example, our Baker Company used the main road in their AO (running between Jisr Diyala and Salman Pak, near Baghdad) as the focal point and began with the villages on the east and west side of this main thoroughfare. Each day they would change sides of the road or move north or south of the villages they had visited previously. After two or three days of patrolling, they would schedule a day with no patrols, to further disrupt any patterns they may have been setting.

Patrols were planned and organized with specific objectives and purposes for each sub-element. The three major tasks were security, IR gathering, and relationship-building. As the composition of most patrols was centered on a mechanized infantry or tank platoon, some augmentation was required. Generally, the company commander was present on patrol to ensure a firsthand look at the AO. Additionally, the company fire support officer (FSO), acting as the company's intelligence officer, accompanied the commander on every patrol. This enabled us to build a framework to address the three critical tasks. The commander focused on building relationships with key individuals, while his FSO (augmented by part of the platoon) was focused on answering the specific IR, and the platoon leader concentrated on security.

In addition to these three sub-element tasks, everyone within the patrol would contribute to the delivery of Information Operations (IO) themes and messages. Generally these themes would include: the rewards program (money for information of extremist activities), examples of the positive steps being taken by the local government and/or ISF, and the benefits of cooperation with the Coalition. Whenever possible, these messages were delivered in the form of pamphlets or handouts given to local citizens. Knowing these messages and having handouts

prepared was considered the Task Force Dragon IO basic load, which was the responsibility of every Soldier on the patrol.

A typical HTM patrol would be conducted in the following manner. The platoon would move tactically and establish a cordon around the specific area to be mapped. As this was being set, the commander/FSO would move to the likely center of the town, or begin immediately to talk with citizens to determine the residence of the local sheikh or village leader(s). While the commander met with these individuals, the FSO (and any augmentees) would begin talking with as many of the military-age males as possible to answer the IR. One of the specific requests the commander would make with the sheik or village elder was permission to enter the men of the village into our biometric-data system. Depending on the reaction to this request, the platoon might establish a centralized location and begin this process. If the sheik/elder was uncomfortable with this request, the unit would earmark the village for a return visit when they could continue to press this issue. However, most times the local leadership had no problem with the request and viewed the biometric census as evidence of their innocence and willingness to cooperate with Coalition forces. Throughout the entire patrol, Soldiers would talk to as many people as possible to pass on the specific IO themes/handouts. On average, these patrols took about two to four hours to complete.

Often times, patrols were reinforced with Civil Affairs teams, human intelligence collection teams (HCTs), Psychological Operations (PSYOP) teams, and/or additional medical personnel. These military specialists provided specific areas of expertise to assist the patrols, and were leveraged to enhanced the perceived importance of the tactical unit. For example, having a unit medic treat a civilian, especially a child, with an acute problem provided direct evidence of the goodwill of our units, and provided a tangible benefit to cooperation with the Coalition. Additionally, having special teams along increased the overall number of people talked to in the village and increased the number of human sensors that could report on our IR. This augmentation

also provided excellent start points for our Team Village (an element combining CA, HCT, and PSYOP teams), which could target specific effects for follow-on visits.

Special care and planning was taken to ensure that these special teams did not interrupt or interfere with the relationship between the company/platoon and the population that was being mapped. We placed a lot of importance on the supremacy of the responsible company commander (the landowner) as the primary point of contact for each village's leaders. We wanted to preclude any confusion on the part of the local leadership as to who would make decisions regarding projects or future support. This is especially critical when dealing with Civil Affairs teams, who can often be seen as the "money guys" in the eyes of the population. Through a deliberate effort, we made it clear that these teams supported the company commander and not the other way around.

After every patrol, the responsible platoon/company would prepare a detailed analysis of the area that was mapped, and links were made to other villages based off of sect, tribes, and terrain. The result was a census-like compilation of data that was then collated by the task force staff. The primary actors at the battalion level are the S2, the effects/IO cell, and the S5. This helped us in the development and further refinement of both lethal and non-lethal targeting. HTM also resulted in a graphical depiction of where potential sectarian fault lines may be which also gave us a point to focus our initial efforts to quickly establish security so that all other logical lines of operation could be worked.

We used this approach to deliberately develop our human terrain map. The overall process took about two and half months when balanced with other tactical missions. Of note, information contributing to our overall HTM was also gathered on offensive missions. During intelligence-driven raids, cordon and searches and attacks, the platoons/companies used the same information requirements as on our HTM-patrols. Foremost of all, all military-age males were entered into the HIIDE (Handheld Interagency Identity Detection Equipment) biometric data system. This enabled an additional data point for piecing together the intelligence picture on the

extremist groups in AO Dragon. It also allowed the intelligence officer to cross reference the person against the database built during previous HTM missions. For example, if we had met an individual during an HTM patrol in Baker Company's AO and he turned up on the objective during a Crusader Company mission, we were able to begin to question why this person is involved in two different areas of the battlefield. We know extremists do not stay within the nicely drawn boundaries we assign to units. The cross reference allowed the intelligence officer to begin to link the person to a possible extremist cell that may live in one part of AO Dragon, but conduct missions in another portion. This allowed us to begin to create an initial link diagram of possible extremist activities.

The Importance of Doing Human Terrain Mapping

In retrospect, we would also point out from our experience that *having* a human terrain map is not nearly as valuable as *doing* human terrain mapping. Human terrain mapping provided an effective technique to learn and begin to understand the battlespace which we were responsible for. In other words, if the type of information we gathered had been available to us when we first arrived (in a database, for example), we might have had a false sense of how well we understood our environment. There is a tremendous advantage gained in the actual process of gathering ethnographic information. By way of analogy, having a ready-made database would be like learning to do math on a calculator instead of learning math problems the hard way. In conducting HTM, we learned how to multiply the hard way.

The benefits of having to do HTM are numerous, but seven particular points are worthy of specific mention.

HTM provides a practical start-point for gathering HUMINT. Human terrain mapping facilitates Coalition forces getting to know the leadership of the different tribes, towns, villages, and cities of a particular area of operations. By earning the respect and the trust of the village sheiks and elders, the locals are more willing to provide intelligence. As our units moved through the various villages and towns of AO Dragon, they constantly found local citizens who had been hesitant to call our "Tips Hotline" or come to our combat outposts, but were more than willing to provide information.

As often as possible, we tried to integrate our supporting HCTs into HTM patrols, which provided an excellent opportunity to make initial contacts and develop sources. It also provided good inside knowledge of local citizens and a ready-made cross-reference capability, providing a better framework for determining the reliability or motivations of informants.

HTM puts a human face on contact with the population being secured. An intended second-order effect of HTM is to enable a unit to move into unfamiliar territory and start to separate the insurgents from the population.

A Soldier with B Company, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, provides security during a joint operation with members of Concerned Local Citizens (CLC) in Iraq.



In the words of one company commander: "I believe it was vital to the initial impression of the locals in our AO that they saw us out walking amongst them, knocking on doors, shaking hands and asking questions specific to that family/tribe. I feel it put a human face on **our company** and opened the door to many of the initial dialogues that we are currently exploiting with great success."

HTM is critical to building trusted networks. The number one tenet of the 3rd Infantry Division's COIN "Warfighting Handbook" states that: "It's all about the people." Building a trusted network involves personal relationships between Coalition leaders at the tactical level and the leaders of the population they secure.

Once those relationships are built, units are better able to deliver and assess the effects of IO messages and PSYOP products, determine if local governments are talking to their constituents, and — if necessary — minimize unrest among the population through consequence-management procedures.

HTM has an indirect effect on the enemy. We believe that being out walking and patrolling was vital to the initial tone set by 1-15 IN. If the enemy tested our strength, we were out of our vehicles with a gun barrel and set of eyes in every direction and prepared to maneuver instantly on contact. We approached every HTM patrol as if the enemy was watching and assessing us. Human terrain mapping brought us closer to the locals and deterred enemy contact.

HTM provides unforeseen opportunities to demonstrate our resolve to the population. During the process of getting to know the leadership and meeting with them in their villages, the companies of TF Dragon oftentimes conducted hasty raids on weapons traffickers and IED emplacements that the citizens of the village pointed out. These raids proved to the local leaders that our Soldiers were dedicated to making their village more secure. Furthermore, these raids proved to local leaders that when they give us critical intelligence information, coalition forces will act on it.

HTM provides ground-level insight into local politics, motivations, and differences — and this can be the start

point for reconciliation. Understanding the differences between Sunni and Shia areas is easy; finding the start point for reconciliation is not. However, once a unit has met and befriended the leaders in separate areas, those leaders now have something in common — a partnership with us. For example, in one particular TF Dragon area, Sunni and Shia families lived amongst each other with different sheiks as their leaders. Unfortunately, the sheiks in these areas were not eager to work with one another to reconcile their differences. To add further confusion to the area, AQI (al-Qaida in Iraq) often attacked both the Shia and the Sunni as a means to keep their foothold. After working numerous HTM patrols in these areas to outline the villages and determine who their leadership truly was, the company commander was able to earn the trust of both the Sunni and Shia leadership. Using this as leverage, he has been able to start discussions between the two sheiks based on the common goals of security and economic development.

HTM gives tactical-level units much better firsthand knowledge of their areas of operation. Nothing can replace the importance of personal reconnaissance. This is a principle that has existed in our doctrine for decades. Even though the data entered into biometric databases includes addresses and street names, this information is often difficult to include/catalog on map overlays. Furthermore, different people may refer to streets/locations by different names. Additionally, many roads in the rural areas are not trafficable by Coalition vehicles: conducting this type of reconnaissance helps a unit to figure this out.

As the U.S. Army continues to examine this aspect of counterinsurgency warfare, we would warn — based on our experience — against a total reliance on a computerized/automated solution to this problem or on the creation of a singular special-staff section to provide human-terrain insight. From what we've learned, a unit must either go out and collect this information for themselves initially, or develop a process to continuously reassess the information they have, if they inherited a developed map from a previous unit.

Counterinsurgency is probably the most difficult form of warfare because it forces

military professionals out of their "comfort zones," and into the complex realm of interacting with human beings. Central to this is gaining the population's support, which often requires a simultaneous effort to drive a wedge that will isolate the insurgents. With a human terrain map, a unit is better postured to understanding — and exploiting these complex human relationships. However, our experience has taught us that the goodness of a human terrain map is not just in the "having," the "doing" is just as important. Our experience shows that the human terrain map is time and energy well spent. Building the necessary human relations with the population you secure is not hard — it just takes time and effort.

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MAJ John Cushing is currently serving as the S3 for the 1-15th Infantry, 3rd BCT, 3rd ID. He received a bachelor's degree from the United States Military Academy and a master's degree from the University of Virginia. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He has served in various command and staff positions to include serving as brigade planner, 2nd Brigade, 3rd ID; commander, B/1-64 Armor and E-9 Cavalry, 2nd BCT, 3rd ID; and as an instructor with the Department of Systems Engineering, United States Military Academy.

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CPT Richard Thompson is the commander of B Company, 1-15th Infantry, 3rd BCT, 3rd ID. He received a bachelor's degree from Troy University in Alabama. He is an Infantry Captains Career Course graduate. He has served in every leadership position in an infantry company from team leader through company commander. He has 11 years prior service in the 75th Ranger Regiment.

TEAM ENABLER⁸

Getting Civil Affairs, Tactical Psychological Operations and Human Intelligence Collection into the Fight

CAPTAIN DAVID J. SMITH AND FIRST LIEUTENANT JEFFREY RITTER

The current operational environment (OE) in Iraq is more dynamic than ever as we work to transition lines of operation (LOO) such as security and governance to the government of Iraq. Units must have the ability to conduct full spectrum operations (FSO) across their entire area of operations (AO). Battalion and brigade-sized organizations are challenged by the numerous tasks associated with providing security to the local populace, creating effective government systems that work within the government of Iraq structure, providing or improving essential services, creating enduring employment, and bolstering the local economy. Combining attachments such as Civil Affairs teams (CAT-A), tactical Psychological Operations teams (TPT), and human intelligence

collection teams (HCT) into a cohesive, separate maneuver element under command and control of the battalion allows units to attack problem sets across all LOO. Our unit — the 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, which is part of the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division — formed an element called Team Enabler that combined these capabilities during the execution of FSO in the Mada'in Qada (southeast of Baghdad) during Operation Iraqi Freedom V.

Team Enabler allows line companies/troops and platoons to focus on the security LOO and the critical tasks of securing the local population from extremist elements and preventing sectarian violence. Team Enabler supplements traditional combat forces by providing a venue to build initial trust and relationships with local civil and

tribal leaders. This is accomplished through combined spheres of influence (SOI) engagements with maneuver or “ground-owning” commanders and focused efforts to improve local government organizations and essential services. Within a few months of implementing the Team Enabler concept, 3-1 CAV saw a visible improvement and an increase in trust between Coalition forces (CF) and the Iraqi population.

Building or improving Iraqi government institutions is critical to the success of our mission in Iraq. The Team Enabler organization allows units to not just conduct SOIs with leaders, but to devote the time necessary to building and improving government structure and efficiency. CAT-As are experts in assisting civil leaders in making community improvements using existing government structures and promoting efficiency in execution of basic governance tasks. They also provide the support channels to coordinate directly between brigade-level partners at the Qada level and Iraqi provincial reconstruction teams (PRT) that coordinate efforts with the Iraqi provincial and national government. This partnership allows maneuver commanders to focus on establishing security and keeping pressure on extremist elements who may try to disrupt CF and government of Iraq efforts. Team Enabler was successful in developing a quick win project plan along Butler Range Road, a key line of communication (LOC) connecting the entire BCT with logistics support from division and corps, that resulted in significant improvement in the quantity and quality of drinking water for several villages by utilizing water delivery contracts and drilling artesian wells. This rapid and visible improvement created a relationship with local leaders and citizens



Photos by SGT Timothy Kingston

A Soldier with the 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, visits with some Iraqi children after members of the unit gave a local school 200 backpacks for its students.



A medic from the 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment wraps an Iraqi boy's wrist during a medical civic action program operation in Narhwan, Iraq, October 8, 2007.

that greatly enhanced the security environment along that vital LOC. TPTs are able to conduct aggressive Information Operations (IO) campaigns that are focused on building support for local government institutions and agendas as they begin the process of "winning the hearts and minds" by reducing popular support for extremist elements. HCT teams provide units with information that allow for the accurate targeting of high value individuals (HVI) through this close working relationship with local leaders. During multiple operations, the HCT team embedded with Team Enabler was able to engage and develop sources that provided significant intelligence on squadron targets. This information was in turn used to kill or capture extremist leaders and greatly reduce the security threat to Coalition forces and local citizens. The synergistic effect of the reduced security threat encouraged locals to open up to Team Enabler and the HCT and provide further useful information. Multiple tailgate medical operations (MEDOPs) and larger medical civic action program (MEDCAP) operations involving Iraqi doctors and medicines provided by the Ministry of Health were particularly effective operations. These operations, along with water and school supply drops, provided opportunities for the HCT to engage local citizens in a secure environment without endangering themselves or their sources.

Providing essential services, creating enduring employment, and building the local economy are key tasks that Team Enabler has the greatest ability to affect. CAT-As,

through project development and prioritization, identify what is needed to achieve the desired effects of the unit and the local government. CAT-As have trained individuals within their team organization to provide the right amount of knowledge, time and energy to properly develop economic near and long term plans within an area of operations. Additionally, this relieves maneuver commanders at the company/troop and platoon level from having to provide combat power to escort these teams. It also allows a singular focus by an entity on achieving "visible improvement" throughout their AO. TPTs are able to collect atmospherics and determine the problem areas in which projects are necessary to deny extremists sanctuary and safe haven. They are also able to determine if a unit is achieving its effects on a population over time. HCT teams once again are able to provide information on extremists in an area through a nonthreatening environment. We have found that information is sometimes easier to collect by a Team Enabler organization utilizing the "carrot" instead of the "stick," which validates the HCT being apart of Team Enabler.

Team Enabler was extraordinarily successful at making connections with local citizens that sometimes the more kinetically oriented combat forces were unable to make. In one instance, the team made enormous progress in the small village of Hollandia by securing medical treatment for the son of one of the citizens. Ahaip, a 3-year-old boy, was born with a birth defect that caused his intestines to be outside his body. This young child was the darling of the village, but his life expectancy was very limited due to his condition. Team Enabler was able to coordinate surgery for Ahaip through an Iraqi medical clinic in Najaf and in doing so, won over the entire population of the village. The entire atmosphere and attitude of Hollandia permanently changed as a result of Team Enabler's efforts, paving the way for the ground-owning



Courtesy photo

Soldiers with Team Enabler 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment secured life-saving medical treatment for a 3-year-old Iraqi child, who was born with a birth defect.

commander to develop a relationship with the village leader that provided significant intelligence on extremist activities.

Team Enabler is not without potential drawbacks, that unless properly identified and mitigated, can cause serious problems within an AO. Team Enabler, being its own maneuver element, increases the risk of "SOI fratricide" and "broken promises" where the maneuver commander and the CAT-A team leader are not synchronized as far as promises made or desired effects. The result is a maneuver commander promising one thing and a CAT-A team leader promising another. Iraqis are quick to identify seams in the command structure, and when they do not get something from one person they will go to the other to get what they want. It is imperative that CAT-A team leaders and maneuver commanders work closely together through detailed reporting and regular meetings to achieve desired effects. Additionally, there is a risk of maneuver commanders not being completely involved in their AO because they see Team Enabler and the lines of operation that do not relate to security as "their responsibility." In the end, conducting full spectrum operations in an AO is the maneuver commander's responsibility, and Team Enabler is an element that supports the ground-owning commander. When correctly employed, Team Enabler is a powerful combat multiplier.

Team Enabler provides desired effects across all lines of operation that would otherwise be extremely challenging for maneuver commanders alone. The organization must be properly resourced and tied in closely with the unit's objectives to truly be successful. The experiences of 3-1 CAV in the Mada'in Qada demonstrate that it is an organization that truly "enables" units to conduct full spectrum operations in a challenging OE.

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Lessons from the Soviet-Afghan War

DEH-KHWAJA AMBUSH

Editor's Note: *This vignette was taken from The Other Side of the Mountain: Mujahideen Tactics in the Soviet-Afghan War, by Ali Ahmad Jalali and Lester W. Grau. The vignette highlights a convoy ambush and illustrates tactics commonly used by insurgents.*

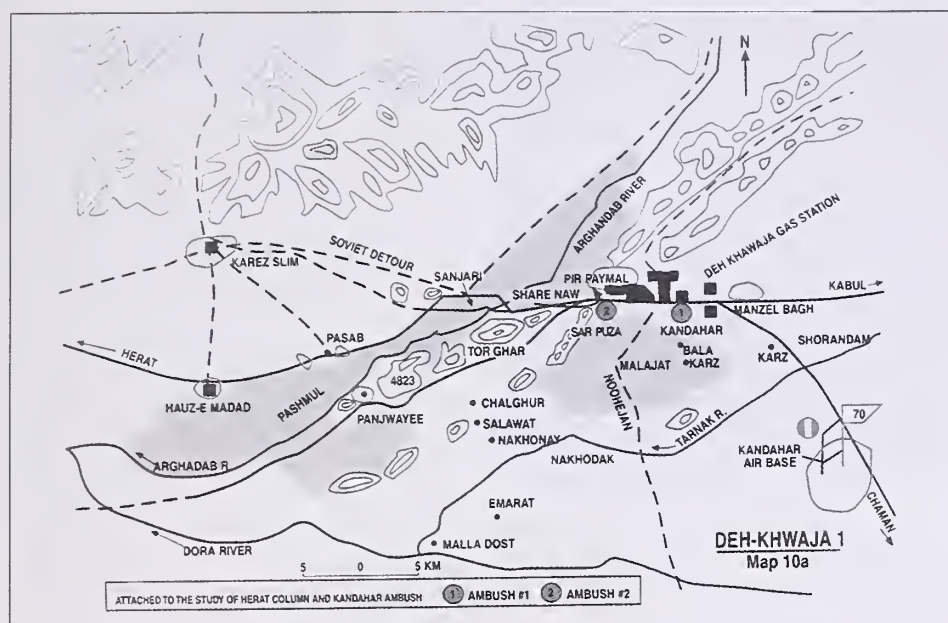
In 1982, the Soviet 70th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade, supported by DRA forces, launched a block and sweep operation against the Mujahideen forces in the center of Panjwayee District. Panjwayee district is located some 25 kilometers southwest of Kandahar city. Mujahideen sources estimate that hundreds of enemy tanks, APCs (armored personnel carriers), BMPs, and other vehicles were involved in the 25-day operation. The Soviet purpose was to punish the Mujahideen groups who constantly harassed Soviet and DRA troop columns and supply convoys on the main Kandahar-Herat highway. The operation was also designed to destroy the resistance bases in the area and widen the security zone around the government-controlled district center.

The Soviet operation in Panjwayee required constant resupply from the main Soviet base located in the Kandahar air base. The supply columns had to travel along the main Chaman-Kandahar road to its junction with the Kabul-Herat highway and then proceed through Deh-Khwaja and Kandahar city to Sarpuza where the Panjwayee access road joins the main highway. (Map 1 — Deh-Khwaja 1)

The Mujahideen groups around Kandahar decided to launch a diversionary action against the enemy in order to relieve the pressure on the resistance in Panjwayee. The Mujahideen realized that the Soviets were weakest and most vulnerable along their supply route and, therefore, decided to strike them there. Although the Mujahideen could conduct small-scale ambushes along the entire stretch of the road, there were only two places suitable for large-scale ambushes. One is a two-kilometer length of road between Manzel Bagh Chawk and Deh-Khwaja. The other is a one-and-a-half kilometer stretch between Shahr-e Naw and Sarpuza.

The local Mujahideen groups in the Malajat held a council of war and decided to block the road and conduct a large-scale ambush at each site. In addition to the ambush forces, the Mujahideen also designated support groups for both ambushes to protect the flanks and rear of the blocking/ambush detachments. About 150 Mujahideen, split up into small groups, moved from the Malajat area during the night and took up positions in the orchards, buildings and ditches along the main road between the Manzel Bagh Chawk and Deh-Khwaja gas station. The back-up group for the detachment deployed south of the city. (Map 2 — Deh-Khwaja 2) A similar detachment blocked the road between Shahr-e Naw and Sarpuza.

Early in the morning, a convoy of trucks carrying ammunition, rockets



Map 1 — Deh-Khwaja 1

and gasoline moved from the Kandahar air base toward Panjwayee. As the column reached the first roadblock, the Mujahideen opened fire simultaneously with RPG-7s, machine guns, rifles and a recoilless rifle. Taken by surprise, the column stopped while the Soviet security vehicles returned fire. Their fire hit the Deh-Khwaja residential areas and caused much destruction. However, Mujahideen fire finally struck the ammunition trucks. They caught fire and hundreds of rockets and boxes of other ammunition began to explode. The explosions were so powerful that burning tires from APCs were thrown as far away as Bala Karz, some two kilometers from the ambush site. The ambush destroyed about 30 enemy supply trucks and damaged many others. The rest of the Soviet convoy turned back. The Mujahideen roadblock at Shahr-e Naw and Sarpuzha had no enemy to attack.

This Mujahideen ambush had a decisive impact on the enemy operation in that it forced the Soviet forces to end their siege of Mujahideen forces in Panjwayee and return to Kandahar. However, in order to prevent future ambushes in the area, the Soviet forces bulldozed Deh-Khwaja homes along the main road out to a distance of 300 meters from the highway.

COMMENTARY: Security of the lines of communication was a constant challenge facing the Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Security of the lines of communication

determined the amount of forces which the Soviets could deploy in Afghanistan and also determined the scale and frequency of offensive combat directed against the Afghan resistance forces.

In this example the Soviets had to move supplies to a large group of forces about 50 kilometers away. The road, although an all-season major highway, was vulnerable to Mujahideen ambushes at almost every point. Further, the Soviets and Mujahideen fought for control of Kandahar for the entire war. The Soviets knew that the road was not secure. And yet, the convoy commander

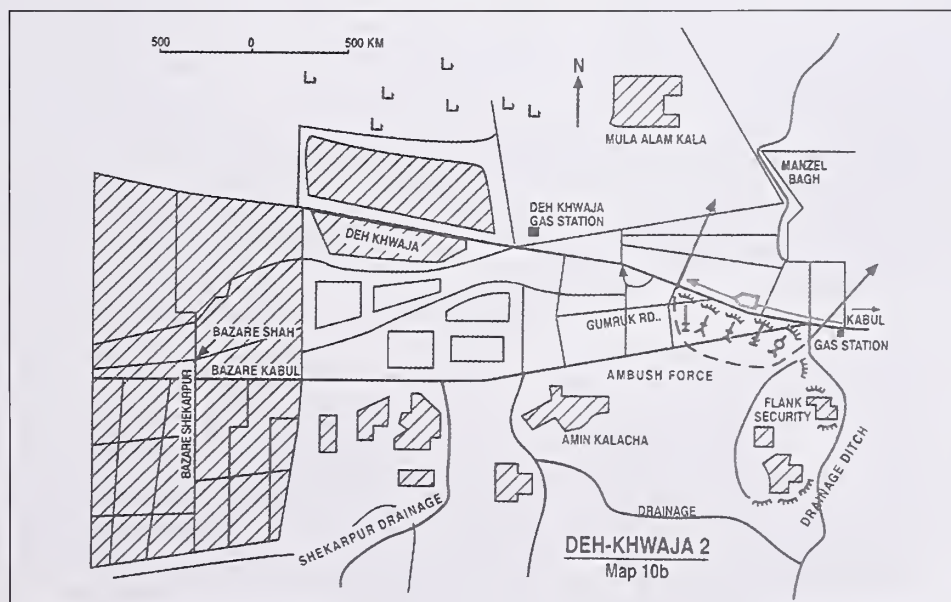
did little to ensure the security of the movement along the supply route. A preliminary road-clearing patrol could have preempted the Mujahideen's successful ambush. Instead, their entire operation was disrupted due to their failure to move supplies to Panjwayee.

Normally, the Soviets spaced APCs throughout the convoy as security vehicles. In case of ambush, the APCs would stop in the kill zone and return fire while the rest of the convoy caught in the kill zone would drive out of it. The portion of the convoy not under attack would stop wait for the APCs to drive off the ambushers. Then, when the ambushers had been driven off, the convoy would reform and continue. That is why the Mujahideen established two ambush zones. They did not think that they would stop the convoy at the first ambush and so the second ambush was ready to hit the Soviet convoy again.

On the other hand, it took the Mujahideen about three weeks to decide help the resistance forces in Panjwayee by hitting the Soviets elsewhere. Had they launched their attack earlier, it could have forced their enemy to terminate his operation against Mujahideen groups in Panjwayee earlier.

(Mulla Malang was one of the most famous commanders of the Kandahar area. He was an adherent of Mawlawi Mohammed Yunis Khalis-Islamic Party [Hezb-e-Islami-Kha-lis-HIK].)

Map 2 — Deh-Khwaja 2



INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION AND SHARING

CAPTAIN TIMOTHY HSIA

Editor's Note: *This article was first published in the Small Wars Journal at smallwarsjournal.com.*

"Who controls the past controls the future."

— George Orwell, 1984

Years from now after the Iraq and Afghanistan wars have ended, historians will pore over the operations and tactics of the U.S. Army during both campaigns. They will likely applaud the all-volunteer force and the courage of the individual Soldier; just as likely, however, they will criticize the lack of information sharing and management between the military and civilian departments of the U.S. government. Specifically, they will note the military's poor record in information management,

accessibility of intelligence gathered, and the inability to apply years of accumulated intelligence to current battlefield operations. A way to patch the current intelligence gap within the U.S. government would be to adopt an information collection program that accumulates data similar to major internet stock market trackers. Market trackers absorb information continuously, rigorously track trends, and enable traders to formulate decisions based off the latest news combined with historical data. The ability of market trackers to store and quickly recall historical data should be mimicked by the U.S. government so that commanders and diplomats possess relevant records that enable them to make decisions which take into account the economic, historical, cultural, political, anthropological, and environmental aspects of the region they are operating within.

When a unit assumes battlespace within Iraq, the first thing that a commander receives from his higher headquarters is a

plethora of maps detailing major avenues of approach, religious divides, key figures, demographics, key infrastructure, etc. However, much of the intelligence is outdated or watered down, and the source of this data is often unattributed. The source of this intelligence is necessary in order to winnow the chaff from the wheat. The intelligence received from higher headquarters can come from multiple sources, which oftentimes can be suspect and unverifiable. For example, is this intelligence derived from an Iraqi Army soldier, Iraqi policeman, neighborhood councils, street vendor, coalition signal assets, or from the previous military units that have operated within the current area of operations? Additionally, this initial trove of intelligence oftentimes provides just the basics and does not delve into more important issues that commanders need to know, such as the amount of money U.S. forces have spent developing the local infrastructure, the number of discontinued projects and reasons for their discontinuance, the quality of local leaders,

*A Soldier with the 4th Brigade
Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division
talks with a local farmer during a
patrol in Iraq June 28, 2007.*

SSG Sean A. Foley



and the attitudes of those leaders toward the U.S. military.

Counterinsurgencies are not won by more Soldiers, cutting edge technology, or more lethal weapon systems. Rather insurgents are defeated when the pacifying force fully understands the local citizenry, when the people identify with the pacifying force, and when there is an abundance of timely information which allows the pacifying force to apply their intelligence to operations that result in overturning and disrupting insurgent activity. Despite the great advances in the U.S. military's ability to leverage technology to gain intelligence, it has been less successful in storing and synchronizing the historical data compiled during the past several years in its campaigns in the Middle East. When a unit redeploys to the states, they usually dump all of their electronic files to their counterparts in no systematic or coherent manner. This is the ideal situation, though if they are on a more limited timeline they might just pass off the most essential information. With units being continually shifted around Iraq with little or no notice to respond to increased violence in different areas, it has been almost impossible for units to properly pass off their intelligence to the next battlespace owner or more importantly to future units that will operate in their sector. At best the problem a commander faces is an abundance of information that is improperly cataloged. Oftentimes, however, commanders and diplomats encounter the worse case scenario — a difficult situation where they have little to no information regarding a region or locale.

A way to remedy the chaotic state of intelligence management is to create a central intelligence collection platform that will allow any unit to upload operation summaries, economic analysis, tribal networks, environmental analysis, and graphical overlays into a central site that future commanders can access when they assume an assigned battlespace. Currently all military units in Iraq and Afghanistan have access to a worldwide SIPR (secure internet protocol router) network which allows them to access, view, and transmit secret information. Expanding this network to encompass a more centralized program of data sharing would not require any additional hardware. A fusion of geography and intelligence within a centralized network can ensure that commanders arrive at any location with the necessary intelligence derived from years of work by previous agencies and military units that have already provided a framework for understanding the enemy and the people in his assigned area. Commanders could then be spared the countless man hours recollecting data that has already been captured thru blood, sweat, and tears. A solution to the current intelligence blackhole would be to collect, store, and sift this data into a "geointel" site organized in a manner replicating stock market data.

Stocks are traded and bought based off intelligence. Any individual trader can access a plethora of information from open

A way to remedy the chaotic state of intelligence management is to create a central intelligence collection platform that will allow any unit to upload operation summaries, economic analysis, tribal networks, environmental analysis, and graphical overlays into a central site that future commanders can access when they assume an assigned battlespace.

sources: basic charts showing a company's past performance, insightful analysis of the company from several analysts, company key leadership, income streams and expenditures, blogs by other traders, and future projected earnings. Stocks are heavily tracked on a daily basis, and without current information traders can quickly squander significant sums. Additionally, traders with insider information can profit spectacularly by making bets that a certain company will move forward on a certain course of action. The stock market mirrors combat and counterinsurgency operations primarily because intelligence

is the driving factor in both realms. Without proper intelligence, commanders are likely to make decisions that do not accurately match the historical patterns and events of the local area. By accessing a geointel site, they can quickly sift through actions made by previous commanders and assess the effectiveness of certain actions. Moreover, they can then verify key leaders in local neighborhoods, determine how effective previous operations were in the long run, and apply lessons learned from past operations. Ultimately, leaders on the ground can plan more effective orders that better mass effects that are not simply kinetic but instead produce an end result that can marginalize insurgents from the base population.

A geointel database should include all agencies of the U.S. government and also extend to coalition partners. Internal buffers can be placed within the site so that only cleared individuals and organizations can access certain intelligence products. The end state would be to encompass each city in the world from South America, Asia, and the Middle East. Each city in the geointel database would comprise of an abundance of historical data consisting of analysis, logistical, intelligence products, and operational summaries from all branches of the military, the State Department, EPA, CIA, and NSA. Moreover, the geointel database would incorporate cutting open source intelligence products produced by news agencies, RAND, and other think tanks. By combining products from different branches within the government, it would ensure that policy makers from different agencies would have a complete portrait of their region and thus prevent decisions based off of data comprised solely from their agency. Moreover, it would ensure that vital and incisive reports would be shared across the spectrum of agencies rather than being lost in a filing cabinet.

This fusion of intelligence would not have to be centrally managed and each commander or diplomat could individually assign and weigh different parameters and factors internally within his staff when deciding amongst several courses of action. Intelligence could be pushed down to the lowest level which would then facilitate bottom-up refinement as each new unit that was involved in a certain locale could update the existing data to include their latest experiences. The battlefield commander, diplomat, or Special Forces ODA team leader could then make informed



SPC Charles Gill

A Soldier with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division and his interpreter talk with a local citizen during a mission in Iraq December 4, 2007.

military, foreign affairs, or political decisions that produce more effective results because the data retrieved from the geointel site would provide them with the latest ground truth supplemented with historic data.

The geointel database should not simply be a dumping area of intelligence products. Although the site should be simple, it should stress coherence and ease of information extraction. Each geographic area of the world from city to district would be assigned a distinct alpha numeric code number. When a certain region is accessed, information could be compartmentalized into different categories: terrain, key figures, economic history, political history, recent events, and linkages between the terrain with the surrounding area. The site would identify individuals who are leading experts in the area and summarize their work as it applies to the region. The structure of the site should provide ease of accessibility while also compartmentalizing information so that only certain areas can be accessed by individuals depending upon their level of clearance. There would need to be a thorough security vetting process to prohibit individuals from being able to achieve sensitive information outside of their region, scope, and responsibility. Reports posted would need to be heavily scrutinized, and readers could apply ratings

to authors and articles thus differentiating between those reports and analysts deemed credible and reliable as opposed to red herrings. An additional safeguard would be to have superiors and agencies to proof and screen all intelligence products posted by their subordinates so that faulty and inaccurate reporting could be stunted before other organizations implement inaccurate information. Moreover, authorship of each article would be apparent to the user if operational security permitted. Thus, readers could then view the analyst's oeuvre, credentials, and security levels and also allow the reader to directly contact the author as to their assumptions and inquire about related issues pertaining to an intelligence product.

The primary difference between the geointel database and market information is the level of security necessary in order to prevent compromising security. When market data is incorrect, traders lose vast financial sums. Likewise, when intelligence data is compromised or incorrect, policy decisions can err and lead to disastrous results which we have witnessed in the past several years. Nonetheless, unlike market information which is open sourced and shared, access to this database would have to be carefully safeguarded as keeping all of our national intelligence and operational information in one distinct site could lead

to major lapses when certain irresponsible individuals have access to the information. The geointel program would require periodical updates to its structure in order to streamline existing data, facilitate ease of information accessibility, and incorporate new storage and search technologies.

It should be noted that as of late the U.S. government has made great gains in catching up to the corporate world in terms of information collection and sharing. Programs such as A-Space and Intellipedia have taken root and offer leaders a quick way to access and share information. Despite these advances, Intellepedia and A-Space are insufficient and ill suited for terrain-based information collection. Intellipedia offers a great way to supplement the shortcomings of a geointel database because its form is ideal in terms of building personal histories or narratives. However, its design prohibits information to be structured in a manner which could fuse different sources of intelligence. For example, Intellepedia's narrative form prohibits overlays, statistics, and random information that is difficult to categorize to combine itself within its database as opposed to a simple market tracker like Yahoo Finance. Ultimately, what is needed is a geointel database which would be much larger and more unified. This database would combine even the most mundane and minutiae of information, thus allowing the leader on the ground to parse and pick through past products that are relevant to his current task and mission.

Decades from now it will be historians who will decide and judge how effective U.S. operations were in this war. In the interim we need to rethink how we capture our history so that we do not ignore the immediate past and fail to properly take these events into account when deciding operations in the here and now. Understanding the Malaysian or Vietnamese counterinsurgency does us little good when we fail to even capture or understand events a year ago in the province we are currently operating within.

CPT Timothy Hsia is an infantry officer assigned to 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment.

MOUNTAIN OPERATIONS

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

RUSSELL A. ENO

Descriptions of mountain troops and their operations often begin with a reference to Hannibal's crossing of the Alps in 218 BC, during the Second Punic War. It was not an easy undertaking by any means. Historians debate as to how many men and war elephants he had with him, but most agree that in May 218 he started out in Iberia — today's Spain — with around 50,000 soldiers, 9,000 cavalry, and 40 elephants. Iberia was already the site of several Carthaginian territories and hence an ideal staging area for his army. When he reached Italy's Po River Valley five months later, he could count fewer than 25,000 infantry, 6,000 cavalry, and less than two dozen elephants. In two weeks in the mountains he had lost close to half his army. Some of his losses were due to the hazards in crossing rivers such as the Rhône, the weather — early Alpine snows had already begun before he left Iberia — and because of treacherous mountain terrain and hostile tribes. His route took him through the territories of some tribes with whom he was able to negotiate safe passage, but others took their toll as well. The Allobroges (Figure 1) later mentioned in Caesar's Commentaries on the Gallic War, were among those whose territories he crossed. Hannibal soon learned their tactics and defeated them, capturing a number of their villages, but not before their ambushes had cost him the lives of soldiers, as well as pack animals, supplies, and time. The intent of Hannibal's campaign lies in the Carthaginian general's determination to transit the mountains, fighting only as necessary to achieve passage of his army. He hoped to rally support from Gallic tribes in Northern Italy and get at his enemy: the Roman army. Hannibal's crossing of the Alps was the first successful transit of mountains in history by a force of this size, and once across he was able to reconstitute his force, recruit, and wage war successfully on enemy soil until he was finally defeated at Zama in the year 202 BC, 16 years after he had crossed Spain's Ebro River.

The Gallic Wars of 58 BC to 51 BC again saw combat in the mountains, but this time the Roman Army was fighting not to simply cross the mountains, but to subjugate many of those same tribes who had impeded Hannibal 160 years earlier and restore peace to a region that controlled Roman access to the lands west and north of the Alps. The indigenous peoples, largely of Gallic descent, had increased in number, had honed their military skills by fighting constantly with one another, and had already expanded into what is today northern Italy. By 61 BC the largest of these races, the Helvetii — ancestors of today's Swiss — had begun moving into territories of the Allobroges, who had finally been



Department of History, U.S. Military Academy

Figure 1

conquered by Rome. At that time, only one understrength Roman legion of around 4,000 men was available north of the Alps to oppose the Helvetii, but Caesar quickly assembled five legions, each close to its full battle strength of 6,000 men, and moved to stop the invaders. In a series of bloody battles such as the Battle of the Arar River, Bibracte and the Battle of Vosges, Caesar stabilized the situation and paved the way for further campaigns against the Gauls, Germans, and Britons. Only by engaging and defeating the mountain tribes of the Helvetii on their own territory was Caesar able to secure the transalpine routes which would enable Rome to reinforce and resupply her legions to the north.

Any mountain operations that took place in the intervening centuries focused on tribal protection of their strongholds and maintaining control of key routes and passes that traversed the mountains. Control of the passes and those who sought passage through them is the stuff of legend, and the Khyber Pass between Afghanistan and Pakistan became symbolic of mountain operations during the First Anglo-Afghan War of 1839-1842, in which British infantry found themselves fighting in terrain and against an enemy they had never before faced. Military tactics up until the early 19th century were predicated on massed formations on open terrain, and scant thought went into planning for fighting in the mountains except when necessity demanded control of specific key terrain. What experience nations had in mountain operations was confined to descriptions of marches through mountainous terrain en route to other battlefields. As result, little if any doctrine existed for mountain operations themselves. Doctrine, however, arises both from the lessons we learn and from our efforts to anticipate and predict future enemy threats. As nations around the world grew and empires expanded, border disputes in the mountains became more frequent, since it was the mountains themselves that had presented readily identifiable terrain features when men first laid down national boundaries and now nations sought to enforce or even redefine the borders.

It is not surprising that the Europeans would be the first to

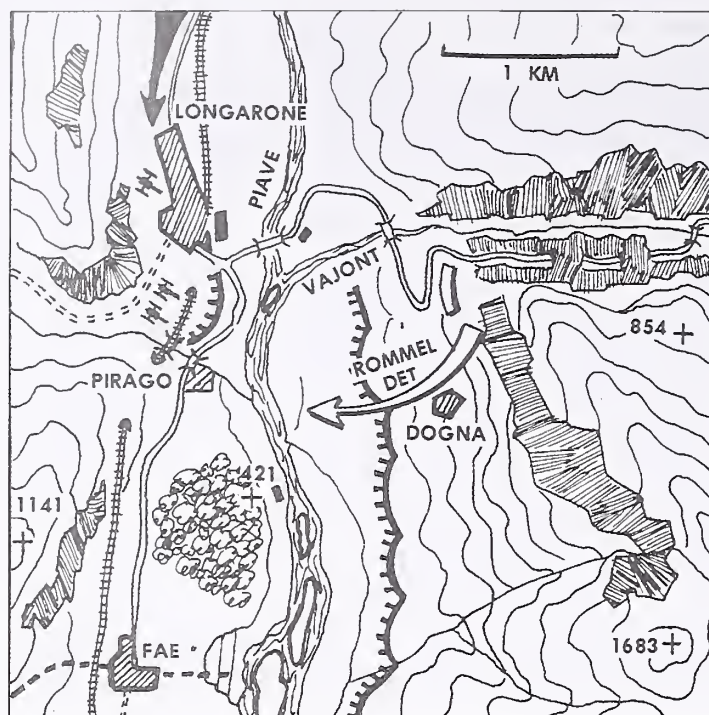


Figure 2

develop and refine ways of operating in the alpine environment, given the concentration of mountains on the Continent, and the often contested nature of borders up on the roof of the world. The Alps, Pyrenees, Vosges, Apennines, Balkans, Urals, and Carpathians all offer obstacles and key terrain for military operations. By the outbreak of World War I in the summer of 1914, both France and Italy had trained and fielded units specializing in mountain operations. The Italian *Alpini* dated back to 1872 and consisted of 15 companies of men, later expanded to 10 battalions and eventually to regiments, recruited from areas such as the Tyrol, a region claimed by both Austria and Italy. (South Tyrol is officially Italian territory, but in the most recent census 69% of the population considered themselves to be of German stock.) The *Alpini* served a dual role, conducting operations on their own or serving as reconnaissance elements and guides for larger infantry units operating in their areas. French mountain troops served in the Vosges Mountains of southeastern France, were organized into battalion-size units, and had artillery designed to be packed and employed in the mountains.

By 1915 Germany had begun training light infantry units for mountain operations, drawing men from the Bavarian and Württemberg regiments, and in the

mobilized, equipped, and deployed to the front an army of 500,000 men in only seven days. German soldiers of the Württemberg regiments fought alongside their Austrian allies, and one of the German officers was Erwin Rommel, later a General Field Marshal in World War II, who as a captain commanded a detachment of two rifle companies, a machine gun company, two batteries of mountain artillery, and signal and radio elements as part of the Württemberg Mountain Battalion (Figure 2).

same year organized the German Alpine Corps for employment in the Tyrolean Alps. The Western Front has received the lion's share of attention from writers and historians, but in World War I few sectors have been more heavily contested than the Italian Front. The Italians held a front of 450 miles, longer than the French, British, and Belgian fronts combined; they faced the Austrians — the fourth largest army in Europe — and

He quickly adapted tactical, communications, security, and logistical tactics and techniques to that portion of the Carnic Alps which was his unit's area of operation, with great success. His *Infantry Attacks*, originally published in 1937, has become part of the core literature for small unit leadership, and describes Rommel's combat actions in Belgium and Northern France, in the Argonne, in the Vosges and Carpathians, and in the Alps bordering Austria and Italy. Translated and published by the U.S. Army in 1943, it found a large, appreciative audience and is today still prominent in Army professional development reading lists. General George Patton read *Infantry Attacks* cover to cover several times and passed its lessons along to his junior leaders. Much of what Erwin Rommel shared contributed to the formation of our own mountain units that served in World War II.

The history of U.S. mountain warfare training is logically intertwined with the preparation of troops for winter warfare because of the bitter cold, snow, and winds found at high elevations. Having observed Finnish successes along the Mannerheim Line against invading Soviet forces, the U.S. War Department established the 1st Battalion, 87th Mountain Infantry Regiment at Fort Lewis, Washington on December 8th, 1941. (By June 1941 the Germans already had 14 trained mountain divisions.) The Mountain Training Center (MTC) was first opened at Camp Carson,

Figure 3

West Point Military History Series



Colorado, and a winter/mountain training site opened at Camp Hale, Colorado in 1942. The 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 87th Regiment were activated, and by the end of November the 10th Mountain Division consisted of the 85th, 86th, 87th, and 90th Mountain Infantry Regiments, and had become the mountain fighting specialists of the Army. Augmented by divisional field artillery, cavalry, antitank, medical, and veterinary units and other combat support and combat service support elements, the division honed its combat skill and survival techniques through the winter of 1943-1944, and deployed to Italy in late 1944.

At this point in the war German defenses in the northern Apennines were anchored on the Gothic Line (Figure 3), later renamed the Green Line because of Hitler's conviction that its loss would present less of a psychological blow to German morale with the new name. This defensive belt ran from south of Spezio on the Ligurian Sea to Pesoro on the Adriatic, and averaged 10 miles in depth. Held by the German 10th and 14th Armies with a combined strength of 14 divisions, the line included nearly 2,400 mutually supporting machine-gun nests, over 470 positions for mortars, assault guns, and antitank guns, and extensive barbed wire and antitank obstacles. While Italian partisans' sabotage and disruption of German communications and rail movements hampered German efforts to some extent, the Gothic Line remained a formidable obstacle, and one which had to be breached if Italy was to be liberated and access to southern Europe gained. During February and March 1945, the 10th Mountain Division saw action during Operation Encore. In a nighttime attack on 18 February the 1st Battalion, 86th Infantry scaled snow and ice-covered slopes to seize Riva Ridge (Figure 4) and the remainder of the 86th Regiment went on to seize Mount Belvedere as the division and its adjacent British Expeditionary Force went on to seize the high ground and highway 64 south of Vergato. The capture of Riva Ridge took the German defenders by surprise and casualties on both sides were very light, but the Germans holding Mount Belvedere were alerted by the fighting and put up a stubborn resistance. The three days of heavy fighting cost the 10th Mountain Division 655 wounded and 195 dead, but the sacrifice of these great Americans meant that by breaching the Gothic Line the Division had now opened the way to the Po Valley and the defeat of Wehrmacht forces in Italy. In 114 days of combat, the 10th Mountain Division destroyed five elite German divisions at a cost of 4,154 wounded and 992 Americans killed in action. Following the post-war inactivation that befell many of our fine combat divisions and reactivation as a training division, in 1954 the 10th was once again called to serve as a combat division, this time in Germany.

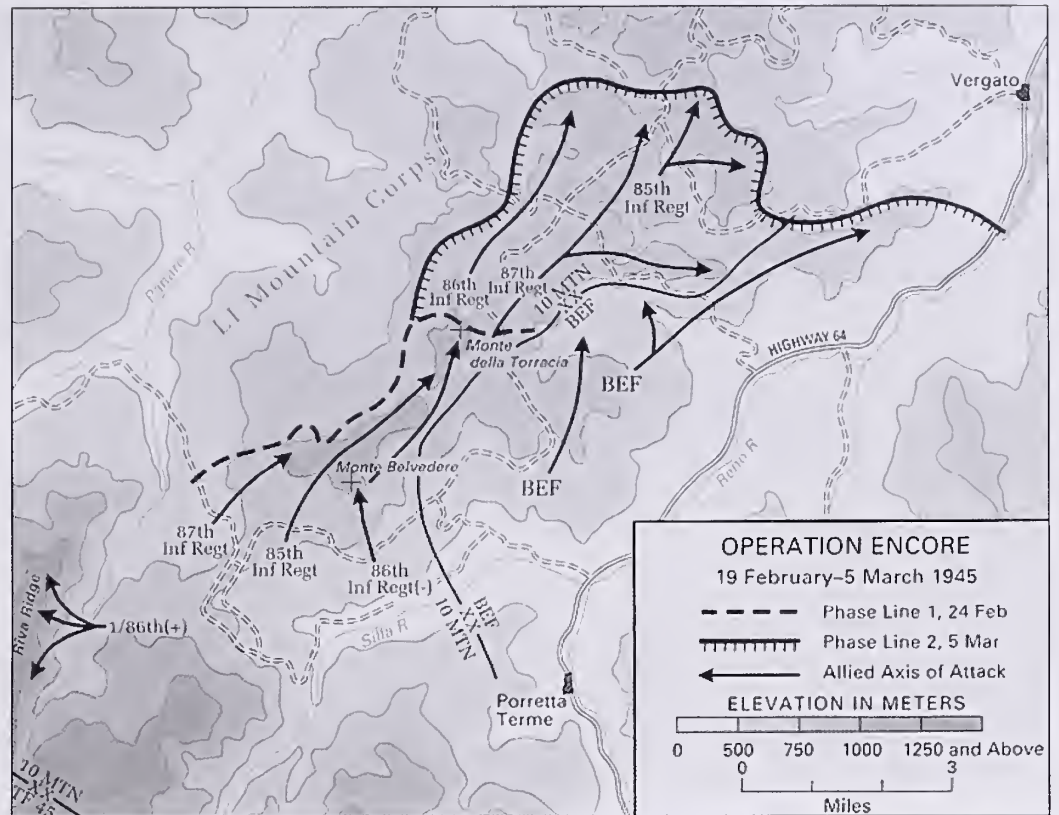


Figure 4

U.S. Army Center of Military History

Inactivated again in 1958, it was reactivated in 1958 and deployed 122 Soldiers to Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and over 7,300 of the division's Soldiers later served in war-torn Somalia.

In today's military literature we have come to realize that the term "mountain operations" does not simply imply one specialized branch, but applies as well to all organizations and units organized and trained for the conduct or support of mountain operations. All branches — combat, combat support, and combat service support — require specialized training, skills, and acclimatization in order to be effective in the alpine environment. The 10th Mountain Division has served with distinction in the global war on terror during its deployments to Afghanistan, along with elements of the 82nd Airborne Division, the 25th Infantry Division, the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), the 75th Ranger Regiment and other Special Operations Forces, the 173rd Airborne Brigade, the 12th Aviation Brigade, the 391st Engineer Battalion, and a wide variety of other military units and civilian organizations. But all Soldiers and civilians preparing for deployment need and are receiving the much of the specialized training they will need at the replacement centers charged with preparing them for overseas movement, with in-country programs in place to further train and condition them.

The global war on terror will not be won overnight, but our incremental successes thus far have undermined the capabilities, assets, and morale of our enemies and will continue to do so until they are well and truly defeated.

Russell A. Eno is the editor of *Infantry Magazine*. He is a 1967 graduate of the University of New Hampshire ROTC program. He retired from active duty in 1991 and has been editor of *Infantry* since 1992.



SGT Brandon Aird

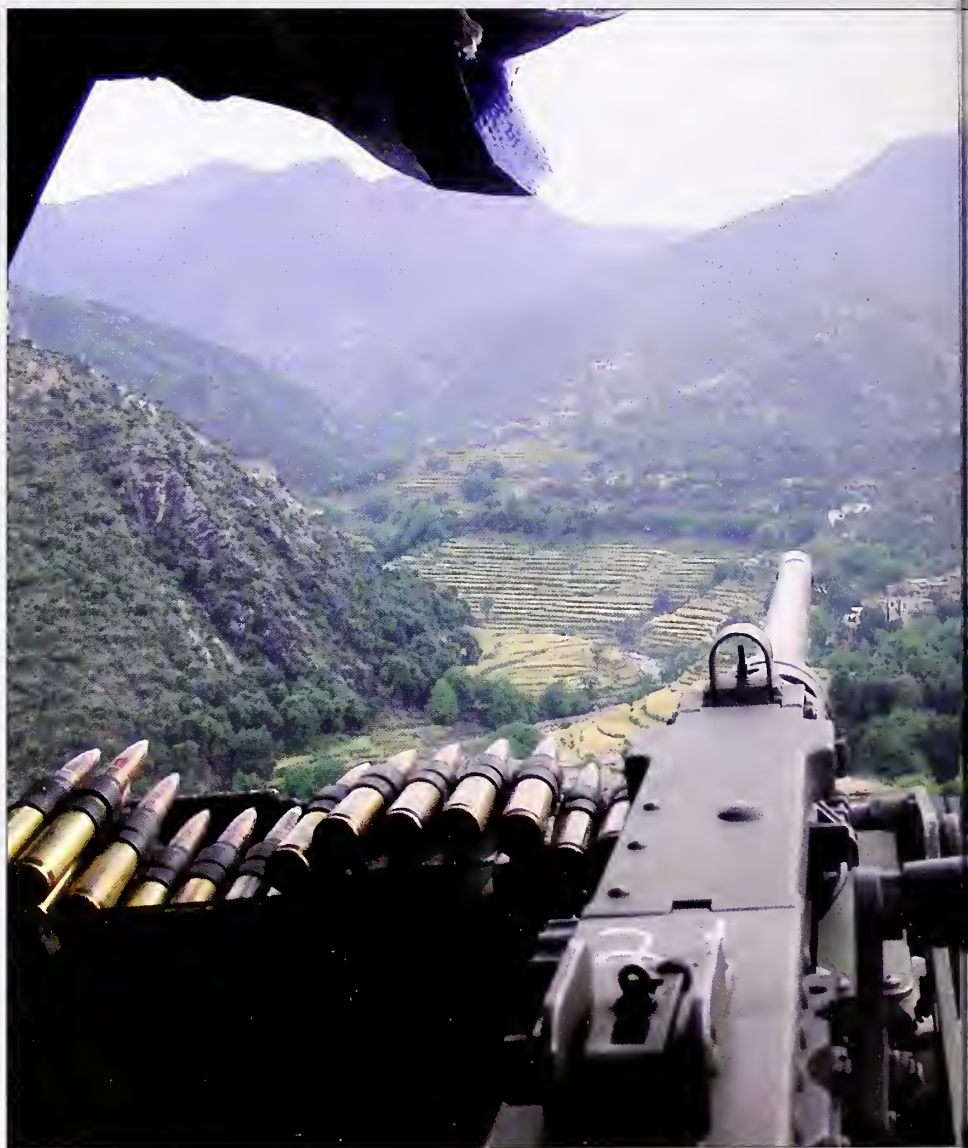
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SSG Michael Bracken



MOUNTAIN Ops

outs from the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne) react as villagers below run after Soldiers moving on the hillside during an Chowkay Valley, Afghanistan, August 22,

left, A Soldier with a provincial reconstruction is Soldiers down a mountain during a patrol province, Afghanistan, June 14, 2007.

below shows the view from a gun position the Korengal Valley. When this photo was 2007, Soldiers with Battle Company, 2nd 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne) were several firebases along the valley in one of the fight areas in eastern Afghanistan's Regional east.



SPC Jason Mace

AMBUSH IN GUMBAD VALLEY

CAPTAIN PAULA A. THOMAS

The 1st Battalion (Airborne), 508th Infantry Regiment, deployed to Paktika province, Afghanistan, in late February 2005 with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. I served in B Company as the executive officer. B Company was assigned to the northern districts of Paktika, spending the first few months contending with flooded roads and repairing the fleet of vehicles inherited from the preceding unit. Due to the severe weather, with snow blocking the border passes to Pakistan, there was very little enemy activity for the first three months. As spring thawed the snow and the resulting floods subsided, we began to see more signs of enemy activity.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the brigade had arrived to Kandahar province in mid-to-late March and engaged in several firefights with the enemy while it was still conducting the transition of authority with the outgoing unit. After several months of fighting in the districts surrounding Kandahar, the Combined Joint Task Force-76 determined that additional troops were necessary in the south. My battalion commander detached one company for assignment in Kandahar province. As things stood, A Company had recently established a new forward operating base (FOB) along the Afghan-Pakistani border, C Company was responsible for more geographic area than any company should have been, and HHC could not be moved without severely disrupting the battalion. That left the battalion commander with sending B Company, originally his main effort for the deployment.

Having just conducted a change of command, the company was actually out on its first mission with its new commander on June 13, when the order to detach a company became nonnegotiable.

B Company was to move to Kandahar province, approximately 300 miles away,

arriving no later than the 20th. After a single meeting with the battalion staff in Orgun, I returned to my company's FOB to coordinate an extremely hurried load-out of the company. The company returned from its mission late on the 15th. Four days later, half of the company departed for Kandahar, and I followed with the second element the next day.

Upon our arrival to Kandahar, we were assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 319th Field Artillery, the "Gun Devils." The Gun Devils, an airborne artillery battalion, had been assigned an anti-armor company from the 82nd Airborne Division, in addition to several companies of Afghan National Army, and was now functioning as a maneuver headquarters. The commander embraced this role fully, but his staff was not organized to support maneuver companies and, as a result, received augmentation from the 173rd Airborne Brigade headquarters. The resulting staff conglomerate was still experiencing growing pains upon our arrival.

The Gun Devils assigned three districts in the northern half of Kandahar province to our company. Of these, Shwali Khot and Mienneshin had recently witnessed fairly heavy fighting between Taliban and Coalition forces. The third, Khakrez, was the site of significant fighting in the past but remained quiet during our tenure. Despite being repositioned to deal with the heavy fighting in Kandahar, the recent bloodlettings had apparently destroyed the local Taliban's capacity to conduct offensive operations.

In late August, we first made contact with the enemy in the form of an improvised explosive device (IED) in the Gumbad Valley of the Shwali Khot district, which belonged to B Company's 3rd Platoon. The IED consisted of old white phosphorous mortar rounds that exploded and burned without damaging any of our vehicles. This was followed by a direct fire

ambush in early September, which wounded one paratrooper and an Afghan interpreter. While the increase in activity marked an obvious trend in retrospect, at the time we treated each incident as a separate event even though they occurred in the same area.

The company was out in force for the parliamentary elections on the 18th of September. Coalition forces supported Afghan police and army at the polling sites, and the elections were held successfully without incident. The elections were the focal point of OEF VI; at their conclusion, my company commander felt comfortable enough to take leave.

His parting words as he entered the customs process to leave country were to remind me that I was not to conduct company missions under any circumstance. He assured me that he said the same thing to the battalion commander, LTC Bertrand Ges, who agreed not to assign any such missions to B Company during the commander's absence, but circumstances dictated otherwise.

The day after my commander departed, the battalion commander found me in my company area, spread a map on the hood of his truck, and gave me a quick warning order for a mission scheduled to commence in three days. B Company would provide support during OPERATION SHAITAN MACH, which was Pashto for "Devil's Face." Three maneuver companies, as well as one firing battery, would participate in the operation. In early June, a series of uncoordinated operations by multiple units resulted in insurgent movement to the northeastern corner of the Kandahar Province, as the Taliban fighters sought to avoid Coalition forces. This eventually resulted in a massive firefight in which direct fire and close air support (CAS) killed approximately 70 Taliban fighters. The commander attributed the currently placid nature of our company's area of operations (AO) to this fight and, given the recent increase in enemy activity, intended to duplicate the effect through a coordinated battalion operation. D Company, 2nd Battalion, 504th Infantry Regiment, was to spearhead the battalion's attack, beginning in the northern edge of Shwali Khot district and proceeding east to the Tarin Khowt Road. My company would provide blocking positions and clear areas to the south of D Company's axis of attack to



Map 1 — Afghanistan

ensure the enemy would flee east. Once we reached the Tarin Khowt Road, we would block the natural exits of the Zamtu Kelay River Valley, while A Company, 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, conducted an air assault to block the southern end of the valley. D Company would then attack down the valley to destroy the enemy. Units would shift based on certain decision points to continue to trap and destroy the enemy. LTC Ges anticipated the entire operation would last five days.

After alerting my platoons to the impending operation, I sketched a general concept of the operation for the company. First Platoon would depart early on September 29th to establish a blocking position along the southern egress routes out of a mountain complex commonly referred to as "the Bowl." I would follow with 3rd Platoon and my headquarters section, stop south of Pada, establish a patrol base for the night, and clear the Gumbad Valley adjacent to the Bowl on the morning of the 30th. After clearing the valley, we would attack along a mobility corridor directly south of D Company's axis of attack to assist in driving the enemy east. The 3rd Platoon would then block an egress

route from the Zamtu Kelay River Valley, while 1st Platoon attacked up a neighboring valley. Second Platoon would depart on the 30th for the town of Zamtu Kelay and prepare to pass D Company into the Zamtu Kelay River Valley late in the day.

I met with my platoon leaders again to hear their input and give them a clearer picture of their role in the mission to focus their planning and preparation. We made no significant changes to the plan and briefed the company order to squad leaders and above the following day. I emphasized several points while giving the order. First, we had received the specific task to "clear" the Gumbad Valley. I specified that 3rd Platoon would have dismounted elements moving along both valley ridges, since the enemy often exploited our unwillingness to climb hills by using them for sanctuary and to observe our movements. I actually designated the clearance of the high ground as the decisive point of the operation since it would deny the enemy the ability to mass fires on the bulk of our forces on the valley floor. I tasked the mortars with providing immediate suppression and blocking enemy escape through isolating fires. We received

dedicated CAS for this mission, and I determined that it would be used to destroy fixed enemy positions, as the terrain in Afghanistan provided natural fortification that could make ground attacks costly.

After a few questions, we concluded the order, and the platoons returned to their respective areas to complete their individual plans. I attended a battalion backbrief. Up to now, I had not attended battle update briefs or any other operations-focused meetings except when my commander was in the field, but LTC Ges and the other commanders considered my comments and recommendations as though I participated in these meetings regularly. After a few minor refinements, the meeting broke, and I returned to the company area to provide a revised timeline. We spent the following two days fixing trucks; re-zeroing and test firing weapons; and loading the supplies of food, water, fuel, and ammunition we would require for the duration of the mission.

I departed with 3rd Platoon the afternoon of the 29th. My headquarters section consisted of my fire support NCO (FSNCO), one gun team of my mortar section, our attached Joint Tactical Air Controller (JTAC) team, and me. On our way out, we picked up a squad of Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers and their two tactical trainers who were French commandos. We made it to our attack position several hours after dark, having suffered a punctured gas tank enroute that our mechanic managed to repair.

The next morning, we pushed out early, passing through the town of Pada less than two hours after daybreak. We halted on a low hill to the north and east of the town to dismount troops to move up the valley. The 3rd platoon leader, LT Justin Quisenberry, contacted me with a report that his interpreter had overheard enemy communications via a small radio scanner given to him for that purpose. Such enemy chatter was common, and the enemy had established several retransmission stations throughout our district to aid in long-range FM communication. The chatter indicated that the enemy could directly observe our element but was not specific enough to allow us to target his location. Since it began immediately after we passed through town, LT Quisenberry believed that the observer was in the town as the enemy was not likely to have climbed any hills so early. He requested to send his first squad on a quick dismounted patrol through the town, accompanied by a squad of Afghan National Army. I approved the patrol which lasted approximately an hour and a half. The patrol turned up nothing, so we continued with our mission.

We moved into the valley with 3rd Squad, led by SSG Andrew Moore, moving dismounted along the western ridgeline and the squad of ANA moving along the eastern ridgeline. One of its French trainers and 3rd Platoon's 1st Squad Leader, SSG John Doles, accompanied the ANA. SSG Doles had become friends with Ben, the French commando, and volunteered to accompany him to provide definite communication with the main body, as Ben's accented English rendered understanding difficult over the radio. Additionally, we lacked strong faith in the Afghan soldiers' ability to fight, and we did not want to leave our ally out in the cold should a firefight actually occur.

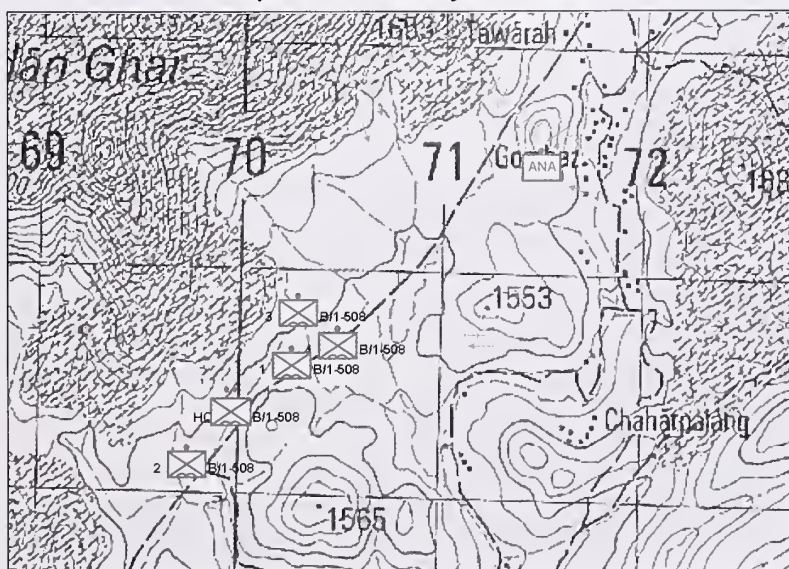
The mounted portion of the platoon, including my section, halted along the valley floor and established a

mortar firing point until the dismounted elements moved approximately 300 meters up the valley. We then packed up and drove until we were level with our dismounts and then repeated the process. The going proved slow and particularly arduous for the Soldiers on foot. We proceeded in this manner for several hours and, judging from the distance covered thus far, I knew we would not be able to clear the entire valley in this fashion and reach our designated attack position for the next day's operations. It was already approximately 1630 local time, and I called LT Quisenberry to let him know that we would recover our dismounts at the next halt and proceed to the Tarin Khawt road. He acknowledged and reported that 3rd Squad had suffered a heat casualty and was already moving to the road. We packed up our mortars and moved forward to receive them.

Meanwhile, the Afghan squad, less encumbered than its American counterparts, apparently continued forward to reach the next peak before stopping. As the element neared the top of the hill, it surprised a group of five Taliban fighters who had just crested the hill to establish a machine gun position. The Afghan element immediately came under heavy fire and became pinned to the side of the hill (See Map 2). SSG Doles called "Contact!" over the radio. SSG Moore rallied his remaining squad members and began a dash across the valley floor in an attempt to reach Doles' position. As they neared the northern end of the valley, the enemy fire intensified, with rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) exploding on the ground behind them as they ran. The rest of the platoon rushed forward into the long valley with the trucks to bring the superior fire power of their heavy weapons to bear on the enemy.

Upon entering the southern end of the valley, we immediately began receiving fire from at least three separate enemy positions. An RPG exploded outside of my own vehicle as we drove into the valley. Meanwhile, SSG Doles, Ben, and one or two Afghans assaulted the enemy on their hilltop. As they attacked up the hill, Ben and SSG Doles were forced to separate so they would not both be canalized by the terrain. SSG Doles was the first to crest the hill and likely killed the two nearest fighters. He began firing upon the machine gun position, which immediately withdrew, both shocked and endangered by his attack. Just then, a sharpshooter's

Map 2 — Initial Array of Forces

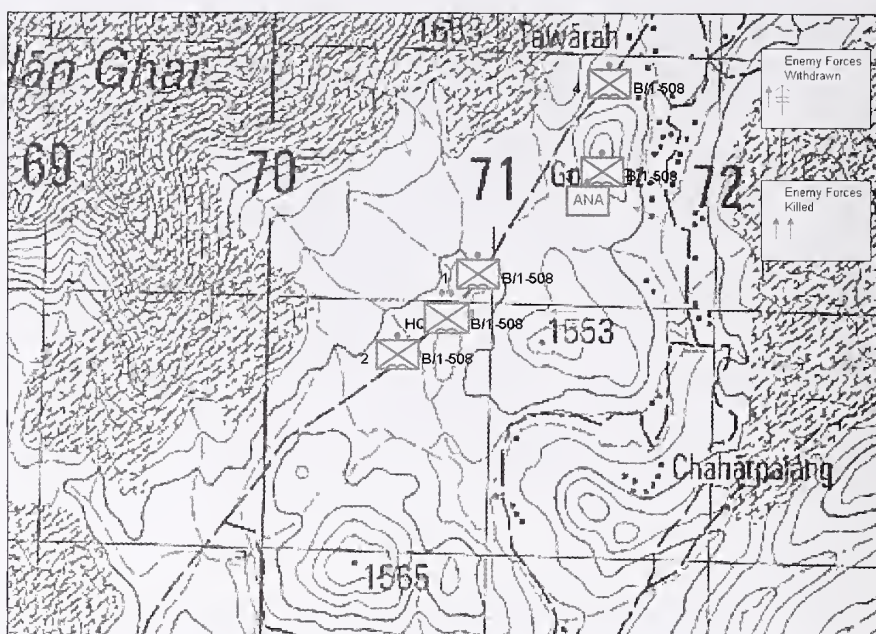


bullet from the eastern low ground struck SSG Doles, inflicting a wound that was to prove fatal. When Ben crested the hill, he found the two dead Taliban and then rushed to SSG Doles' aid, but it was too late.

As my HMMWV bounced into the valley, I called in the contact report over the tactical satellite radio (TACSAT), doing my best to sound nonchalant. I reported nine to 12 enemy fighters with small arms and RPGs, gave my current grid, and said I had all assets on hand that I currently needed. My HMMWV then skidded to a halt behind our mortar truck, whose crew had dismounted to establish their firing point. My FSNCO and I dismounted immediately, turning on our portable MBITR (Multiband Inter/Intra Team Radio) radios. Having very little idea where my forces were on the battlefield, I instructed the mortars to shoot what they could see and to watch for our men maneuvering on the enemy. Turning to my JTAC, who just exited his vehicle behind mine, I said that the A10s on station could identify and engage targets on the western ridgeline, as I was certain none of my own men were there. The mortars began to hang rounds as I trotted forward to join a squad that had taken cover behind some rocks.

I crouched with them for a moment before I realized that we were not receiving effective fire, then grabbed the nearest team leader and got the squad moving forward in bounding overwatch. The platoon sergeant, SFC Vernon Williams suddenly appeared along the road, beating his armor's chest plate with his non-firing hand and yelling at them to get into the fight. The team leaders looked at me and I said, "You heard the man; get moving." I stood up and jogged down to SFC Williams to see if he had a clearer picture of the fight than me. He said he had been held up behind the first sergeant's truck and had no better idea than I where his squads were. We continued up the center of the valley, noting that the AK fire was becoming progressively more accurate as we moved into their range. The squad accompanying us fell in behind an armored cargo truck driven by SFC Erik DaLuz, a senior medic who volunteered to accompany SFC Williams on this mission since the platoon medic was on leave. We stopped briefly to assist a Soldier with his M2 machine gun, which cycled rounds, but failed to fire. Another paratrooper engaged the Soldier's intended target with an AT-4 instead.

During this, SSG Moore and his squad reached the hill where the Afghans were still pinned down, this time by the sharpshooter. The sharpshooter had killed an Afghan soldier with a clean shot to the head and had creased the scalp of another. Uncertain of the enemy's position and not realizing the danger, 3rd Squad passed uphill of the Afghans. Suddenly, a team leader was thrown to the ground by an explosion on his back. A round from the sharpshooter had struck an M203 HE grenade carried in a belt around the team leader's waist. His automatic riflemen began firing into the low ground but could not effectively suppress the sharpshooter. Heedless of the danger, SSG Moore rushed forward and pulled the injured Soldier back behind cover, alternating between dragging and firing as rounds snapped by his waist and head. Seeing the



Map 3 — Mid-engagement

extensive wound on the Soldier's back, Moore stuffed it full of Curlex gauze to control the bleeding. SSG Moore radioed LT Quisenberry, who was just reaching 3rd Squad's position, updating him on the situation and the need for medical evacuation.

SFC Williams and I reached the northern end of the valley. We determined that at least three trucks had moved through the northern saddle via intermittent radio communications (See Map 3). Despite numerous attempts, neither of us had much luck raising either the squad leaders or platoon leader on the platoon or company net. Due to the convoluted terrain, the low output power of the MBITR, and the ongoing firefight, reaching anyone even briefly seemed like a major success. SFC Williams moved off to link up with his platoon leader on the eastern hillside and figure out what was going on. Despite the communication problems, we knew at this point that the team leader was wounded, but we had no idea where he was. Neither of us yet knew that SSG Doles had been mortally wounded.

My first sergeant finally caught up to me at this point. After a brief consultation, he moved north through the saddle with the company medic since he believed the casualty might be with that squad. I sent my FSNCO with him to determine if we had troops on the western hilltop so I could coordinate a CAS strike. I attempted to radio back to my truck to move the headquarters element forward to my position. After several patchy radio contacts, much hand-waving, and even some colored smoke to mark my position, the trucks had yet to start moving, and I was suddenly interrupted by Quisenberry's voice crackling over the net. He said we had two casualties, and he needed a medic immediately. He talked me through to his location, which I relayed to SFC DaLuz. DaLuz pointed out that he needed litter bearers to evacuate the casualties from the hillside.

As I grabbed two Soldiers to accompany DaLuz, I noticed that everyone, including our mechanic, was staring intently down their sights at the eastern ridgeline. SGT Toby Hogan, my mortar gun team leader, explained that they had recently taken RPG fire. Several RPG rounds had literally skipped off the ground behind the team's ammo bearer as he hammered in the aiming stakes.

Keeping my truck between the hill and me, I reached through the cab and grabbed the TACSAT hand-mike. I delivered a brief update and then delivered a nine-line MEDEVAC request. The battle captain confirmed receipt, and I turned my attention back to the eastern ridgeline. I yelled to a nearby M240B gunner on top of a truck that I needed cover to the top of the ridge, then looked about to see what combat power I had on hand. I saw a 3rd Platoon team leader with a M203; his SAW gunner; two Afghans, one with an AK-47 and the other with an RPG; and me. With this ad-hoc fire team, I took point between my men and the Afghans, and we moved up to the top of the ridge, where, fortunately, the enemy had already chosen to withdraw. I left the fire team up there to secure the ridgeline; consulted briefly with my JTAC, who had managed to dismount a radio and follow us up; then went back to the truck and reported via TACSAT that the HLZ for MEDEVAC was now secure. I directed the M240B gunner to dismount his weapon, and I sent him up the ridge to reinforce the position, sending my mechanic as his ammo bearer. I threw SGT Hogan a packet of VS17 signaling panels and pointed out where I wanted the HLZ.

By this point, the fighting had died out completely, and 3rd Platoon was beginning to regroup at the northeastern hill. LT Quisenberry called back to report on our casualties; I received vital signs for the wounded paratrooper, who had been struck in the same manner as SSG Doles, and learned that another paratrooper died. He requested that I move the HLZ closer to the hillside. I got drivers back in their trucks, and we moved back up the valley.

My first sergeant assumed control of the HLZ once I reached the northern end. I checked on our casualties, learning their identities. MEDEVAC arrived within 45 to 50 minutes of my initial call. I consulted with LTC Ges on TACSAT and directed my first sergeant to find a suitable spot for a patrol base. We established local security and began preparing for the next day's operations. At LTC Ges' direction, the Gumbad Valley would be the focal point of the battalion's operation for the remainder of the mission.

Closing Thoughts

The company learned several valuable lessons from this action. With regards to

On our part, we reaffirmed the value of using dismounted forces despite the rugged terrain and would use similar tactics in the future with success. While the company mortars had successfully forced the withdrawal of one RPG team, attempts to use CAS in such a fluid fight actually disrupted our tempo, allowing another RPG team to successfully escape.

the enemy, it was the first use of a sharpshooter in recent memory in Kandahar province. The fact that the sharpshooter was positioned to guard against enveloping forces displayed a tactical prowess never before seen in that region. Additionally, the ambush itself was tactically sound and showed that the enemy had become proficient in this technique.

On our part, we reaffirmed the value of using dismounted forces despite the rugged terrain and would use similar tactics in the future with success. While the company mortars had successfully forced the withdrawal of one RPG team, attempts to use CAS in such a fluid fight actually disrupted our tempo, allowing another RPG team to successfully escape.

The company failed to make effective use of several key weapons systems during the fight. One .50-caliber machine gun did not fire due to issues that could have been identified through test firing. Since the only available range for test firing heavy weapons was outside of the airfield, platoons often did not test fire these weapons until they reached their sector. Only the firefight on the far side of the northwestern hilltop involved the effective use of medium and heavy machine guns, which supported infantrymen as they assaulted up the hill.

Of all the issues, however, the greatest failure was in command and control. Since I had begun the morning with two platoons within FM range, I remained on the company command frequency. When 3rd Platoon dismounted during the fight, all of its MBITRs, to include the platoon leader's, were on the platoon frequency. I kept my MBITR, however, on the command


frequency for the majority of the fight. So, in addition to the fact that squads fought in three separate directions, I found myself unable to communicate with anyone but my headquarters section until I realized the issue and dropped to their platoon frequency. This led to the confusion as to whether CAS or ground forces were to be used to destroy the enemy on the western hilltop. Unfortunately, the broken terrain interfered with radio communications so much that I would have likely been unable to receive reports from the platoon elements regardless. The platoon leader stated that he only had spotty communications with his elements throughout the fight as well.

We also identified several areas to sustain within the company. Very few formal operations orders were given during our tour in Afghanistan. The order given for this mission constituted my single truly significant contribution to the fight. By using a deliberate decision making process, I unwittingly set the conditions for our success on the battlefield. Had we paid lip-service to the planning process, casualties would likely have been more severe.

Our company mortars demonstrated yet again that accurate and quick suppressive fire could rapidly break the enemy's will to fight. Initiative and aggressiveness on the battlefield also rapidly built combat power against the enemy positions. The company also demonstrated a high degree of proficiency in medical tasks, from first aid to establishing an HLZ, saving the life of one severely wounded American.

While I hesitate to call the battle a victory, the lessons learned that day resulted in immediate improvements in the company's standard operating procedures. Despite the increase in enemy activity, the company sustained only one other casualty during the remaining months in theater and conducted a successful hand-off with allied forces amidst continuing, albeit more limited, enemy actions.

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PLANNING FOR SUPPORT OPERATIONS IN A MOUNTAINOUS ENVIRONMENT

MAJOR MICHAEL MULHERIN

SPC Matthew Leary

In any operation, it is the leader's responsibility to set the conditions for his subordinate unit's success. This principle is no different in the mountains of Afghanistan or on the city streets of Iraq.

During mountain operations, there can be a greater importance on combat support and combat service support planning and setting of conditions than during urban operations due to the severely restricted terrain, the rapidly changing and unpredictable nature of the weather, and the limited and unreliable sources of air support in a mountainous environment. The responsibility for this planning and setting of conditions falls as much on the infantry company commander as it does with combat support or combat service support elements typically associated with those activities because of the decentralized nature of the counterinsurgency fight and the increased responsibility at the lowest levels of maneuver command.

It goes without saying that a mountainous environment is primarily composed of severely restricted terrain. The extreme relief in terrain, the limited number of trails and roads, the limited trafficability of trails and roads, and the natural obstacles (such as bodies of water) that are rarely

spanned due to the remote nature of mountainous areas, all greatly impact a unit's ability to resupply itself. Even when counters to any of these factors exist, they oftentimes are so few in number that security can be degraded by the predictability of the action.

My company's experience during Operation Mountain Lion in the spring of 2006 provides a typical example of the logistical challenges faced at the company level in Afghanistan. My rifle company's operation included a three-hour drive from our base of operations in Asadabad, along a single road through the Pech River valley (a road barely capable of accommodating a U.S. vehicle at several points), crossing a river with the choice of two different foot bridges (either bridge barely capable of accommodating a U.S. Soldier with his personal equipment), and a further 13-hour dismounted movement along another single road into a connecting valley (incapable of accommodating anything but individual dismounted movement once we began the final portion of the ascent to our objective, climbing approximately 5,000 feet in two days). The effect this had on our logistical capabilities was immense. Our mounted portion was completely supported by U.S.

capabilities, our dismounted portion was supported partially with local national (LN) vehicles and manual support (LNs carrying our rucksacks with nonsensitive equipment and personal gear), with the majority of effort coming from the heavy perspiration of 150 U.S. and 50 Afghan Soldiers.

We were able to hire local national support with the use of our field ordering officer funds, and they soon became a consistent fixture of our logistical trains, with all five local national vehicles, in the valley in which we were operating, working directly for our company team (or more specifically for my first sergeant). We also augmented our diet with local national bread, due to the increased caloric intake required in a mountainous environment, and the decreased amount of Class I in our Soldier load, predetermined in an effort to cut weight anywhere possible without sacrificing ammunition, batteries, cold weather gear, or water. Our interpreters would normally conduct the transactions with local nationals, ensuring the locals were offering us a fair price. After a couple days in our position, we did receive air resupply, and whenever the weather allowed, the logistical support from our

forward support company was incredible, moving enough Class I to our position to resemble a Walmart stockyard. As our company (and battalion and brigade for that matter) learned over the course of 16 months, the weather could not always be counted on to cooperate with anticipated logistical support, and requirements for ammunition, water, food, and replacement ACUs (single stitch uniforms were not very durable, especially in the seat of the trousers) did not cease.

Anyone that has been stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado, will recognize that local weather (for Colorado) is normally reported by as many as nine geographical regions. Some regions contain portions of other regions, such as the Urban Corridor (the area that straddles Interstate 25 from the Wyoming/Colorado state line south to Pueblo), and the Palmer Divide (a ridge of land that extends from the Front Range of the Rockies in central Colorado, eastward toward the city of Limon on the eastern plains), but they are reported in these nine different regions because they cover areas of typical travel and residence (such as the Urban Corridor), or they cover areas of common weather patterns and systems (such as the Palmer Divide). The regions reported in the Colorado area are so numerous because the weather can be so different in such a short span of time and space. The areas covered by the nine regions range from approximately 3,000 to 14,000 feet in elevation, have multiple mountain ranges and valleys, and subsequently multiple accurate weather sensor systems throughout the area to understand current conditions, and forecast developing weather.

The significance of this example is that conditions in Afghanistan are very similar in regards to terrain and weather, but not the ability to accurately report and analyze the weather in time for operational planning that takes place days in advance of execution. Elevation in our company, let alone our battalion or brigade area of operations, could range anywhere from approximately 1,000 feet to over 9,000 feet above sea level, and upwards of 14,000 feet at the extreme end of the spectrum. Aircraft could originate at bases with almost an 8,000 foot difference in elevation between where they took off and their destinations for resupply. The weather between those two locations can vary drastically based on the elevation alone, but intervening ridgelines add an additional factor that can change weather conditions from one valley to the next. This affected both rotary wing and fixed wing logistical support, as well as close combat aviation, and close air support (although for obvious reasons fixed wing aircraft were able to fly in slightly less desirable weather conditions than rotary wing).

Because of this advantage by fixed wing aircraft, and in an effort to make up for a lack of rotary wing support (due to weather effects and availability), airdrop resupply by containerized delivery system (CDS) was utilized, and will no doubt continue to be utilized by most units during operations in Afghanistan. With the extreme relief in terrain, few open flat areas, and local national residences in close proximity to U.S. bases, CDS drops also provided a possibility of significant collateral damage to civilians and their property, as well as a significant possibility of a missed drop (in terms of missing the

planned drop location), and consequently a missed resupply. Because of these inconsistencies and dangers, CDS drops were not an adequate replacement for rotary wing or ground resupply.

Because of these rapidly changing weather conditions, the limited amount of aircraft and available mission hours, and the relative lack of accurate weather sensors in locations necessary to analyze conditions (usually a battle captain telling you what the sky looks like), special consideration needs to be taken in mountainous environments during operational planning. Logistical support, close combat aviation, close air support, and casualty evacuations (CASEVAC) involving either rotary wing or fixed wing aircraft in the mountains, or more specifically Afghanistan, have to be planned almost assuming the supporting missions will be cancelled.

The key to alleviating the stress these conditions place on combat support or combat service support in a mountainous environment is realistic assessment, and advanced planning at the company level. The greatest resolution for resource requirements is where the rubber meets the road, and the responsibility for anticipating things such as detainee movement support, supply class requirements and status, CASEVAC possibilities, and impacts from the weather over the long term, all fall squarely on the shoulders of the company commander. Without an accurate and knowledgeable assessment in areas such as these, battalions, brigades, and divisions can not correctly allocate combat support and combat service support elements to ensure the right assets are where they need to be when it matters the most. With the flexibility of the U.S. Soldier and the strength of the combined arms commander, the difficulties of the mountains can be overcome.

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SPC Micah E. Clare

Soldiers with the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry Regiment watch as supplies are dropped by aircraft in the Paktika province of Afghanistan November 10, 2007.

CONSTRUCTING A PLATOON FOB IN AFGHANISTAN

CAPTAIN CHRIS O'BRIEN



Author's photos

One option for creating a forward operating base was to move in with the indigenous population (usually mud hut police or government buildings).

During the spring and summer of 2005, Battle Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade, built and occupied three platoon-sized firebases in the mountains of Northern Zabul Province, Afghanistan. Each of these firebases was located at altitudes of more than 8,000 feet and at least 40 kilometers from the company and battalion headquarters. Ground travel was extremely dangerous or impossible, and aviation assets became increasingly scarce throughout the deployment. As the company's executive officer (XO), I was responsible for coordinating the construction and logistical supply throughout our deployment. By sharing my experiences, I hope to pass on some knowledge to the Infantry XO, S4, and forward operating base (FOB) NCOIC, assuming that they, like me, lack any prior background in the technical issues of FOB logistics and construction in remote areas.

Why Small Decentralized FOBs?

Constructing small (platoon-sized) firebases colocated with local nationals to provide foreign internal defense is nothing new in counterinsurgencies. Special Forces Soldiers have been doing it for decades. Our unit went into Operation Enduring Freedom VI planning to rotate one platoon at a time through a safe house at the district headquarters of Day Chopan — an area where the locals were still hostile to the U.S. and Afghan governments. The effectiveness of permanently keeping a small force with the district leadership and Afghan police was too good not to duplicate throughout our area of operations. Our company sent two more platoons to build their own FOBs in neighboring district headquarters. Colocating in population centers enabled us to deny the enemy access to the local population, influence and assist the local government, provide security, and to train local police and army units to provide their own unaided security. Each platoon leader owned his own battlespace (the district). The platoons could routinely conduct daily joint patrols within FM range; conduct longer overnight patrols with the support of the Afghan National Police (ANP) or Afghan National Army (ANA); and conduct long range air mobile operations after being picked up at their FOBs.

Over the course of nearly a year, the platoon leadership developed strong relationships with locals that allowed the leaders to maintain a constant "read" on the population and insurgents,

providing the chain of command with bottom-up intelligence for the planning of missions and use of higher level assets. The longer the platoons were in sector, the more they integrated as a unit with the local national forces that were colocated with them. A platoon (minus) with a few squads of ANP or ANA Soldiers could move 20 kilometers through the mountains on foot, carrying only a fighting load, and have the local national forces drive their rucksacks and resupply with pickup trucks the next day. Over time, continuous dismounted patrolling denied formerly hostile areas to the enemy in a widening circle of space, while constant contact with the locals won over the support of the population. One of the most contentious areas in Afghanistan became an area where the Taliban feared local informants as much as U.S. firepower.

To conduct continuous operations, these austere firebases were resupplied by helicopter about once a week — at best. Our commander set a goal for our platoon FOBs early: Soldiers had to be able to live comfortably with high morale and be able to function at least six weeks before rotating teams to the larger FOB where the company and battalion headquarters were located. Considering that their starting point was unsanitary, hostile and crude, this was no small task.

Initial Planning and Contracting

We had two options for building our FOBs. The first option was to move in with the indigenous population (usually mud hut police stations or government buildings). The second option was to build FOBs from scratch. The advantages of the using the mud hut FOBs were that our Soldiers could have more direct contact with the local government, the locals identified U.S. Soldiers with the emerging Afghan government (and vice versa), and the construction itself was less intensive. No engineers, other than the sapper squad attached to the company, were needed to make the FOB livable. There were many disadvantages of using the mud huts. The Soldiers were thrown into extremely unsanitary conditions until they made improvements. Untrustworthy local officials could easily tip off the enemy to outgoing patrols with a cell phone call. We could not choose to build where the terrain was best suited for defense. Populated areas are usually in valleys,

meaning the FOBs ended up with high ground on multiple sides. By contrast, building a FOB from scratch allowed us to design it exactly where and how we wanted, but it was much more resource intensive. To make a single FOB defensible and livable, we needed to conduct a 30-vehicle convoy through dangerous terrain (we lost two route clearance vehicles in the process); our entire sapper squad and the host platoon and other battalion assets were out of the fight for more than two weeks; and, afterwards, the platoon was forced to spend more time making improvements than patrolling. Additionally, building a new FOB from scratch meant dealing with the locals' claim to the land we were building on, and because it was built outside of small arms range from the population, there was much less contact with the local population and government. By the end of our year of deployment, our company ended up with two mud hut FOBs, Baylough and Khakeran, and one built from scratch, FOB Aktar.

My recommendation to any unit thinking about building a FOB is to allow at least a month of planning and preparation before beginning construction. We allowed three weeks of planning and preparation time when we built FOB Aktar from scratch, and even then, it was not enough. The most important time consideration for every arrangement I and the S-4 section made, was that even at war, administrative and logistical requests work on a business schedule and take time. It can easily take up to a month to write an operational needs statement, get bids from contractors, get contracts awarded, draw money, and be ready to start work.

Before developing FOB Aktar, the S-4 section and I drew on experiences from developing Baylough and Khakeran to prioritize our three weeks of planning and preparation. One of the first things I did was to request that the FOB be placed on the aviation resupply ring route so that we would not have to rely on nonstandard resupplies once the Soldiers settled in. The S-4 shop attempted to modify the existing "jingle" truck contracts so that the truck companies could drive supplies to the FOBs unescorted (this did not work, escorts were required). We used two types of trucks: 20-foot jingle trucks and smaller dump trucks. In the mountainous terrain, the dump trucks were much more successful. While that was taking place, I contacted the MWR

representative, in the office of CJTF-76, to start ordering a satellite internet/phone system and limited gym equipment. Even after getting in the queue early, we waited months for a satellite phone/internet system. Additionally, I began looking for contractors to carry out the needed labor requirements. Wherever we went, the population was very hesitant to work for Coalition forces. We had to find contractors from outside the area and provide escorted transportation for them. We found contractors to dig wells and to fill HESKO barriers, and we hired an excavator.

Finally, I made adjacent unit coordination with the support platoon to conduct one large convoy to the site. This convoy consisted of 20 trucks of supplies, eight fuel trucks, and two trucks carrying a Bobcat, SEE, and the excavator. Without a good recon, we learned the hard way that the 20-ft jingle trucks and route clearance vehicles were too large for the tight mountain roads, and we ended up losing critical supplies when some trucks rolled over.

While these arrangements were being made, I worked with my sapper squad leader to design a concept sketch for our new FOB. We based the design on our experience and a local Special Forces FOB. This concept sketch allowed us to break down the planning of the FOB into four areas: Force Protection, Quarters, Utilities and Storage, and MWR/Soldier welfare.

Force Protection

Force protection at our platoon FOBs

was no different than at larger FOBs. The challenge posed by the terrain was moving the bulk class IV items required to emplace force protection. Again, because of IEDs, small arms attacks and rollovers, we accepted risk with every convoy we conducted. If we could have performed fewer convoys, we would have. The force protection planning factors were pretty significant. Delivering 1,000 meters of MIL-7 HESKO barriers required seven 20-ft jingle truck loads (or 14 dump truck loads). In the process of installing HESKO barriers at Baylough, we visited the Directorate of Public Works (DPW) and contractor managers at Kandahar Air Field. We received a packet of plans and planning factors for guard towers, B-huts, and barrier material, with the required class IV requests already prepared. The engineers at DPW taught us much about the basic engineering at FOBs. I recommend any XO or logistician visit the DPW at their nearest air base.

Filling the HESKOs was another concern for us. We tried hiring heavy equipment and hiring a contractor to use local labor. A front end loader or excavator cost \$25,000 to fill 1,000 meters of HESKO barrier. At a different FOB, local workers with shovels cost \$16,000 to complete the same job. Both accomplished their tasks in less than two weeks. The advantage of the heavy equipment was that, with coordination from the contracting office, it could be used for other tasks such as digging a berm for fuel blivets. The advantage of the local labor was that it put



Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade, fill sandbags at a forward operating base in Afghanistan.

money directly back into the local population.

The best form of force protection in the mountains did not come from the HESKO barriers, however. It came from observation posts (OPs) that were built on the surrounding hills and manned by Afghan police or ANA soldiers. To move the class IV items to the OPs, we coordinated a nonstandard resupply of three Chinook pallets of wood, concertina wire, sandbags, and fuel (for heaters) to the top of the mountains. Once we could maintain control of the high ground around our FOBs, our next biggest concern was protection from indirect fire.

Finally, one of the best things we did at our FOBs was have the security expert from KBR at Kandahar Airfield conduct his own security assessment. After he made his recommendations, and we made the few changes he suggested, KBR technicians were allowed to fly out to the FOBs to perform maintenance on generators, plumbing, and other FOB utilities. Again, the coordination for this took about a month.

Utilities and Storage

At 8,000 feet in the mountains, maintaining utilities such as electricity, fuel, and plumbing, was a continuous struggle and headache for the platoon sergeants and me. Few things can cause morale to drop faster on a FOB than losing electricity because of lack of fuel. In Afghanistan, we closely monitored fuel consumption on a daily basis, and I became very concerned anytime I saw that a platoon used more than 50 gallons of fuel in a single day, except in the winter when more was needed due to heating requirements. When our Soldiers moved into the mud hut FOBs, we began sending five-gallon fuel cans on CH-47 pallets and then graduated to 50-gallon drums. Later, we installed 20,000-gallon fuel blivets at the sites and filled them with locally contracted fuel trucks on one of the few escorted convoys we conducted. At all three FOBs, we attempted to put a five to six month supply of fuel in the blivets before the anticipated heavy winter began. The biggest problem we had was that, as infantrymen, we had no institutional knowledge of fuel blivets and their setup and accessories, nor did we have any fuel pumps for the blivets. The fuelers from the local aviation battalion were able to help us out with a few parts and our FSB lent us a small pump, but an additional complication was that none of the U.S. hoses or connectors fit into the Afghan trucks. The lesson learned was that we could not afford to be amateurs about fuel. If we could do it again, we would have designated an expert in each platoon to train on fuel storage and ordered at least two pumps per platoon (one as backup). The best pump to order is a military standard 125 gallons per minute pump. It is small enough to fit into the trunk of a HMMWV and is fairly reliable. One thing we did do right was to hire a local contractor to make an adapter to fit our hoses into an Afghan fuel truck.

Finding the right size generators for the FOBs was another difficult task. In Afghanistan, we could acquire 220 volt generators from KBR or local purchases, or laterally transfer 110v military generators from other units. Small to medium generators were hard to maintain and hard to obtain, so our unit did not have the luxury of being picky. We ended up with mixed voltages on the FOBs. A platoon FOB, running a satellite internet system, lights, computers, and battery chargers, required a total of 20 kilowatts of electricity and enough amperage to run multiple appliances. The best generators, in terms of output, reliability, and fuel

consumption, were the 13 kilowatt generators made by Olympian, and we supplemented them with smaller, locally bought generators.

In the winter, heating became a major concern for us. We planned in advance to place enough diesel-powered heaters in every tent and room of all of our FOBs, but we did not count on the fact that only 50 percent of them would work. Some of this was due to manufacturer defects, while dust and altitude contributed to further malfunctions. Because of the amperage required, we could not afford to use more than one or two electric heaters at each FOB.

While gray water plumbing was an easy issue to address, keeping clean water flowing was not. For toilets, we sent two portapotties to each FOB, but since there were no emptying services available, each Soldier took a trash bag with him and used trash bags to cover the seat. When he was done, the tied-off trash bags were thrown into a burn pit outside the FOB walls. The only issue with this is that trash bags become a critical supply item. I could count on a platoon going through 40 trash bags a day. To keep clean water moving, we had to hire contractors to dig wells at our FOBs. The problem we had then was keeping enough water in our water tanks to maintain sufficient pressure in the pipes. We had a submersible pump installed in one well, but it was unreliable and broke frequently. Our platoons overcame this problem by hiring locals to pump water and constantly maintain our 300 gallon water tanks. We still had problems with frozen pipes in the winter, broken fixtures, and a host of issues that our sappers, or knowledgeable Soldiers, had to address constantly.

To store items, such as trash bags brought in by the regular resupply rings, the platoons required more storage than simple mud huts or tents could provide. We slung in empty connexes from Kandahar Airfield. Each platoon optimally required three connexes or shipping containers, to hold a 90-day supply of MREs, T-rations, bottled water, and other critical supplies. Watching the level of these supplies and having the discipline to limit consumption of them was a critical task of the platoon sergeant, no different from sending supply requests during missions.

Facilities

In terms of facilities, the most valuable thing we did was to ask KBR to expand on the practice of turning connexes into small offices. We had seen this done at Kandahar Airfield and had even installed one at FOB Baylough for the satellite internet system. After a discussion with the KBR security manager, I began working on designs with our battalion S-4 shop and some engineers at DPW in Kandahar, who then coordinated with a vertical construction team from the Hawaii National Guard to outfit a set of connexes into kitchens, bathrooms, and more offices. The idea was that the whole package, along with connexes for storage and a generator, would be modular and transportable so that when we wanted to leave, we could sling out the connexes as easily as we had slung them in. The kitchen connex was designed with a T-ration burner inside and included a sink large enough to cook and wash pots, as well as gas burners, counters, and cabinets. The wash connex included two showers, two sinks, and a washer and dryer machine. It had two 300-gallon water tanks on top of it, so that gravity maintained the water pressure. The office connex was wired with six internet connections, shelves, and a desk. One issue in making the design a reality was that the connexes had to



In terms of facilities, the author said the most valuable thing his unit did was to expand on the practice of turning connexes into small offices.

come from somewhere. The U.S. government owns some connexes and pays rent on others. We could not just go cutting holes in good containers. At Kandahar Airfield, there was a large yard with connexes that had been used as bunkers, had bullet holes in them, or were otherwise unserviceable for shipping. This meant they were perfect for our purpose.

In terms of living space, B-huts were more advantageous than living in mud huts. One squad, sleeping on cots, could live much more comfortably in their own space. The plans for the B-huts came from DPW, and the amount of class IV required to build them was massive, which presented problems with transportation. At Aktar, we tried every conceivable method of delivering bulk class-IV: heavy air drops, CDS bundles, convoys, sling loads, and CH-47 pallets. No single method was successful, and the vertical engineers that were tasked to our battalion spent a lot of time waiting for supplies to arrive. At Baylough, we made more room for Soldiers by putting up two large fabric tents. One complete tent could fit on two helicopter pallets and was generally weatherproof. For the Soldiers who did live in mud huts, the platoon had to spend time reinforcing the roof with plastic to keep it from leaking and hiring locals to repair the roof after heavy snow.

MWR

MWR at our FOBs was a critical component. The psychological effects of not being in contact with loved ones, not being able to work out, and having no way to "vent" the stress of continuous operations could be seen in the beginning of the building of all three FOBs. A satellite phone and internet system was the single most valuable piece of equipment we installed

on the platoon-sized FOBs. We obtained the systems by going through the CJ-1 MWR center in Bagram. The satellite Voice Over Internet Protocol system is a non-portable contracted service through a company called Broadband IVS. The company sent a local technician with the six-foot dish and about one CH-47 pallet worth of gear to each of our small FOBs to install the service, and on occasion,

sent a technician to fix the system when it went down. It is important to note that this system requires 17 amps of 220 volt power. I cannot understate the boost in morale to our Soldiers at each of their FOBs when they were able to call and e-mail their friends and family. FOB Aktar was on the wait list for a system for almost five months. Our next best substitute for this FOB was an Iridium phone system that allowed the Soldiers to call home without worrying about running out of minutes (compared to a Thuraya phone). The other important item that CJ-1 in Bagram provided was an Armed Forces Network (AFN) dish and decoder for each of our FOBs. To get the dishes operational, we had to coordinate with CJ-1 to receive training in the setup of the satellite dishes.

Gym equipment was another commonly requested item. A platoon does not need much to be able to work out. A few exercise bikes or stairmasters (that do not require electricity), a flat and incline bench press, a pull-up/dip rack, and an assortment of dumbbells were sufficient. If I could have obtained more, the platoons would gladly have accepted it. When the 10th Mountain Division relieved us, each platoon brought dumbbells and weights in its platoon ISUs, which was great foresight.

Finally, I was always impressed with the creativity and resourcefulness our paratroopers. At times when we were unable to provide anything else MWR related, as long as I could get an abundant supply of class IV items and tools, the Soldiers built whatever they chose in their own time. One of our platoons used extra plywood to build a dojo for combatives' training during the winter, while another platoon built decks and porches for each of their squad tents. FOB improvements were

a positive outlet that not only made their homes more hospitable, but also gave the Soldiers something to do between constant patrolling and missions.

Final Thoughts

Operating a company in a decentralized manner in severely restrictive terrain was not easy for the Soldiers or for the logisticians supporting them. The principal proponent that made them successful was that each platoon sought to be self-sufficient in every way possible. They rotated fire teams back to Qalat, each of which had a vested interest in building and pushing pallets of supplies of exactly what their platoons needed and representing their platoon at company planning meetings. The result was a high number of E-4s and E-5s conducting business well above their pay grade. They assisted with planning air and ground logistics, coordinated supplies and people coming into and out of Qalat, conducted coordination with attachments, and regularly worked with the battalion staff to ensure that their FOB was being taken care of. Each platoon had a host of smart "handymen" capable of addressing minor maintenance issues on the FOB and who could be cross-trained for such things as operating MKT (mobile kitchen trailer) burners, repairing generators and heaters, or installing AFN equipment. Because the platoons pushed so hard to be self-sufficient, there was more time available for me to make necessary coordinations for FOB development described above. As an XO, there was no way I could have supported the development of three platoon FOBs if I had to worry about maintaining them on a daily basis. With the transformation to brigade combat teams, many of the problems my company encountered will be taken out of the hands of the infantrymen and placed in the forward support company. As welcome as these changes are, one thing that will not change is the basic requirement for successful FOB development thorough planning and Soldier initiative.

At the time this article was written, **CPT Chris O'Brien** was attending the Maneuver Captains Career Course at Fort Benning, Georgia. He is currently serving as a troop commander with the 6-8 Cavalry Squadron, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division in Arab Jabour, Iraq. CPT O'Brien is a graduate of Cornell University and has previously served as a platoon leader and executive officer with the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

Training Notes



A HIGHER CALLING

Training Curve is Steep at the Army Mountain Warfare School

BOB ROSENBURGH



Photos by Bob Rosenburgh

SGT Eugene A. K. Patton descends down an ice-covered rocky outcrop.

The global missions of the U.S. Army mean that Soldiers can, and often do, find themselves in a variety of challenging environments. If that terrain is steep and deep, as it is in the rugged peaks of Afghanistan or the crags of Kazakhstan, then special training is needed to make an ally of the ground instead of letting it be an impediment. That's where the Army Mountain Warfare School (AMWS) in Jericho, Vermont, comes in by providing the necessary higher education.

The mission of the AMWS is to train Soldiers in the specialized skills needed to operate in mountainous terrain, regardless of the weather or time of day or night.

"We don't focus on tactics," said CPT Christopher Ruggerio, the AMWS assistant operations officer, "but rather on how to move and survive under all conditions at higher elevations. Once that is mastered, the tactics a unit uses are developed around their increased capabilities."

Being able to use adverse terrain and weather to their advantage is truly a force multiplier.

"Our school is unique in the total force system," said CPT Ruggerio. Operated by the Vermont Army National Guard and commanded by LTC John J. Abeling, they provide training to all elements of the active Army and Reserve component, Army ROTC and West Point cadets, other branches of the armed forces, allied forces and civil agencies from around the country.

AMWS was established in 1983 and the program of instruction was approved by Training and Doctrine Command in 1986. "We've been accredited as a School of Excellence twice by the Infantry School," CPT Ruggerio added, "and in 2005 we achieved permanent member status in the International Association of Military Mountaineer Schools (IAMMS), a select group of highly trained military mountaineering schools from around the world." He said the member groups come from nations such as Italy, Belgium, Germany, Sweden and Austria. The application process took six years, and AMWS is the only member from the United States. "We even hosted the IAMMS conference here in 2005."

AMWS is a part of the Ethan Allen Firing Range, an 11,000 acre facility started in 1926 and which is the primary training area for the Vermont National Guard. Also, about 40 minutes away from Ethan Allen, is Smuggler's Notch. "It's a ski resort," CPT Ruggerio explained, "but on the backside is the Notch Pass, which the state allows us to use as a secondary training area." At Smuggler's Notch,

the AMWS students complete a challenging three-day mountain walk that puts all their newly-learned skills to the test.

The school offers Level 1 and Level 2 mountaineer training. At Level 1, students must complete the summer and the winter Military Mountaineer courses to be awarded the Skill Qualification Identifier – Echo. The Ram's Head Badge identifies the accomplishment.

"Level 2 is our Assault Climber's Course," said CPT Ruggerio, "This is the advanced course for mountaineer leaders and subject matter experts, like a jumpmaster or master gunner would be in other disciplines."

Level 2 climbers are responsible for inspecting and training mountaineering in their own units, ensuring safety and keeping an eye out for potential problems with their troops' equipment or other needs. They are the commander's expert and advisor for anything having to do with mountaineering skills and tasks and supervise Level 1 mountaineers.

The AMWS can also provide mobile training teams (MTTs) which deploy to remote locations and teach mountaineering skills off-site. "We get calls for on-site, off-



Soldiers strap out snowshoes before moving out on a AMWS mission.

site, CONUS and OCONUS teams from all over," he said, "wherever we're needed." The school offers both summer and winter courses, since the different seasons present unique challenges given the same location.

"For obvious reasons, like the snow and ice and cold in the winter, you need to use different climbing techniques and equipment," he continued. "You use your ice axe and crampons to climb, and in the summer you're rock climbing using your hands and feet."

AMWS also teaches avalanche rescue techniques, and the mountaineering techniques are designed to be effective beyond the wooded hills of Vermont.

"The mountains in Afghanistan have very few trees, so we also teach Soldiers to engineer anchoring systems using the natural terrain and equipment on hand," CPT Ruggerio said.

While in Afghanistan as part of an MTT, a team of AMWS instructors wrote the SOPs for high angle/high altitude recovery and well-cache recovery.

"The enemy was hiding weapons caches in wells — some of them were even booby-trapped,

and we developed techniques of how to go down into those wells and recover the caches," CPT Ruggerio said. AMWS dedicates its time and resources to not only training Soldiers but finding out what is relevant and working in the field to help Soldiers and commanders accomplish their mission.

Both classes are 14 days in length, and CPT Ruggerio said they only take 60 students per class due to the student/instructor ratio and the size of our facilities.

"We teach fundamental mobility and survivability skills and how to move through mountainous terrain," he said. "We also teach how to use adverse weather conditions and terrain to your advantage, so you don't even need to be at altitude to use these basic skills."

Since 1999, the average graduation rate for Level 1 students has been 86 percent. About 36 percent of the students are from the Reserve component, while the active duty slice averages 27 percent, of which about 65 percent are Special Operations Soldiers, and Army ROTC makes up another 35 percent. Other students come from organizations such as the FBI, U.S. Navy, Air Force, Canadian Mounties, law enforcement, allied forces, etc. The school is funded primarily by the National Guard Bureau, with non-Army students being



AMWS students move single file to help pack the snow as they descend a steep hill into a valley below.

funded by their parent organizations.

"We graduated 431 students from the course last year," he said, "and there were 60 ROTC slots in the summer course and 60 in the winter course."

Cadet Manuel Orozco, a Green to Gold Scholarship cadet from Florida State University, has completed two tours in Iraq, one in Bosnia and one in Kosovo as an enlisted Soldier. Already a graduate of the Summer Mountaineering Course, he jumped at the chance to complete his SQI requirement with the winter course.

"I've been to multiple service schools, but this one is different from all the others," he said. "All the new skills I've learned can be used in Afghanistan or other mountainous terrain, and in combat that knowledge will keep my men alive."

Cadet Shelby Vance Williams from the University of Central Oklahoma agreed. "I can see this benefiting a lot," he said, "with all the different types of terrain we're fighting in, the effects of weather on weapons and movement and so many other things encountered in higher terrain."

He said the training has additional advantages. "Just the discipline and the pace will make other things seem easier. Plus, this is a harsher terrain than almost anything you'll see elsewhere, so it really prepares you."

Cadet William Klein from Central Washington University heard about the school when he was a freshman. "I didn't think I'd get a chance to come because they just had one slot to fill every two years," he said, "but this year they had an extra one and I couldn't pass it up." He said one of his favorite parts of the school is learning all the different rope systems and knots. "I plan to branch Aviation and if I ever crash in a remote area, the skills I learn here could save my life."

Because of their advanced expertise and the rigor of training, AMWS has only 12 summer and 12 winter slots for Level 2 Assault Climber students. Graduation percentages, however, are nearly 100 percent because a Level 2 student is generally highly capable, experienced, and motivated from the start.



When not skiing, snowshoeing, rappelling or climbing from point to point, students at the school are transported and supplied by a small fleet of tracked Small Unit Support Vehicles (SUSVs).



The AMWS teaches fundamental mobility and survival skills.

"What makes us so good is our instructors," CPT Ruggerio summarized. AMWS is a National Guard facility and, as such, much of the staff may spend their entire careers teaching the courses. The levels of expertise developed in that time are impressive. The instructors may also frequently be deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan on MTTs or volunteer for expeditions to places such as Mounts Everest and McKinley.

SSG Tyler Williamson, from Fox Company 51st Long Range Surveillance Company at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, said the AMWS provides the Army with a priceless service. As a veteran of mountain warfare in Afghanistan, he sees a clear advantage for Soldiers who complete the course.

"We're trying to facilitate our operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and I'm here to get the right training to do it," he said. Williamson explained that fighting the enemy in his own backyard requires special expertise. "I think this helps close the gap," he said. "We have the technology advantage and with schools like this, we can move better and engage in high-angle operations. When I get back, I'll help set up our mountain section, refit and retrain them and hopefully get more Soldiers up here."

He said his unit wants to enroll more of their troops in the summer and winter courses. "The Army needs to put an emphasis on mountain warfare and on this school, and the word needs to get out throughout the Army about what's available here."

Bob Rosenburgh retired January 31 after serving 10 years as Public Affairs Officer for Western Region, U.S. Army Cadet Command at Fort Lewis, Washington. A Vietnam veteran, he finished an Army career in Armor, Aviation and Public Affairs as a SFC. Bob is a Noble Patron of Armor, a Washington General, and long-time member of the American Society of Aviation Artists and the Armor Association. He is also the designer of the U.S. Army Public Affairs insignia and author of the book *Snake Driver! Cobras in Vietnam*.

ISLAMIST MILITANCY AND YEMEN'S INTERNAL STRUGGLES

A Look at the Writings of Yemeni Colonel Abd-al-Wali Al-Shumairy

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER YOUSSEF ABOUL-ENEIN, USN

The United States military must focus on the study of small conflicts that raged from the Soviet-Afghan Wars to the present. These wars on the surface appear tribal, internal and political, but from internal chaos are opportunities for transnational terrorists. Another phenomenon is the creation of popular fronts that are not political or revolutionary but merely mercenary. These are far cries from the bipolar world of the Cold War. Today's complexities involve Islamist militants that appear in unlikely places, such as the West African diamond markets or quietly acquiring technology in East Asia.

On May 22, 1990, North Yemen reunified with communist South Yemen. But the unification was shaky, and the Marxists had spent several years collecting weapons and organizing to effectively control Yemen. The communists also engaged in raging battles with Islamist militants over the direction a unified Yemen would take. Add to this complexity returning Yemenis who are veterans of the Soviet-Afghan War, and a proliferation of small arms and assault weapons that leaves three weapons for every man, woman, and child in Yemen. Another aspect that makes Yemen an attractive base of operations for Islamist militants is a thriving drug trade in the stimulant plant called "Qat."

It is vital that U.S. military planners look into Arabic and scarce English texts on the conflicts that Yemen has experienced in its



modern history. This essay will demonstrate the integral role Islamist radicals have played in Yemen's conflicts. Yemen remains a useful model in studying how regimes on the Arabian Peninsula handle their internal conflicts using Islamist militants.

The most definitive book on the 1994 Yemen Civil War in the Arabic language is a difficult to obtain two-volume set by Yemeni Colonel Abd-al-Wali Al-Shumairy titled *Harb Alf Sa'ah Milhamah Al-Wihdah Al-Yamaniyah* (*The 1,000-Hour War: Reflections on Yemeni Unification*). Al-Usr Library published an updated second edition in 1995 in the Yemeni capital Sana'a. This book will be used as the primary Arabic source for this study along with English books and articles. It will highlight the perspectives of a Yemeni

intellectual on the recent Civil War of the 1990s.

The United States takes interest in Yemen because of the strategic maritime choke point of the Bab-el-Mandab Strait, because Yemen is the ancestral home of Usama Bin Laden, and because of the Hadramaut Mountains which still contain extremist Islamist militant cells that threaten U.S. interests in the region. Al-Qaeda affiliates in Yemen have also been innovative in their methods of attack, such as maritime attacks on the USS *Cole* (DDG-67) and French tanker *Limburg*. Yemen is also where American John Walker Lindh was radicalized and joined the Taliban cause. Furthermore, Ramzi Bin Al-Shibh, who attempted to enter

the United States and become one of the September 11th hijackers, hailed from Yemen as do many Al-Qaeda leaders and detainees. It is estimated that Yemenis make up the third largest national representation in Al-Qaeda after Egyptians and Algerians, according to Jonathan Schanzer in his article "Yemen's War on Terror," which appeared in the Summer 2004 issue of the Foreign Policy Research Institute's journal *Orbis*. Understanding Yemen's history is vital to American military policymakers who are crafting means in which to counter Islamist militant groups.

1799-1934: Aden Becomes Vital to the Great Powers

A critical year in the Islamic world is

Glossary of Acronyms, Terms, and Personalities Which Aid in Understanding Yemen's Wars

ACC: Arab Cooperation Council, an Iraqi proposal prior to the 1990 Gulf War to economically tie Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Syria and Yemen as a counterweight to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Ali Al-Beidh: Last president of communist South Yemen and from 1990 to 1994 was vice president of a unified Yemen. Led the 1994 war for South Yemen to secede from North Yemen and lost. Was exiled in Oman.

Ali Abdallah Al-Saleh: Current president of Yemen.

Abdel-Majid Al-Zindani: Islamist and jihadist force in Yemen, co-founder of the Islah (Islamist) Reform Party, leader of the Islamic radical Al-Iman University in Yemen's capital Sana'a. U.S. Treasury Department Specially Designated Terrorist.

Asir (Province): Southwestern Saudi province bordering Yemen, its regional capital is the city of Abha.

Bin Rashids: Pre-World War I tribal confederation in Northern Arabia bordering Iraq with their capital in Hail. They were backed by the Ottoman Empire and were defeated by the Al-Sauds after World War I.

Bin Saud: The current Saudi ruling family.

DPRY: Democratic People's Republic of Yemen established in 1972 and lasted until 1990. It is the only communist Arab state to ever exist.

Fatwa: Religious ruling that carries the weight of an edict in some circles and is based on following what an Islamic religious law specialist decrees in order to settle a question where Islamic jurisprudence is unclear.

FLOSY: Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen, a movement and militia established to eject British forces from Aden and South Yemen. This evolved into the DPRY.

GCC: Gulf Cooperation Council, an economic and security arrangement that ties Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Oman.

GPC: General People Congress is the ruling party in Yemen.

Hamiduddin Dynasty: A branch of the Al-Qasimi Dynasty that ruled Yemen since 1591, the Hamiduddin branch formed its own dynasty with the support of European rulers in 1918. Yemen's monarchy ended in 1962 in a coup that led to a five year civil war.

Hashemite Dynasty: Descendants of Prophet Muhammad, they ruled Arabia's western coastal province of the Hijaz from the holy city of Mecca from 1916 to 1925 when they were defeated by Bin Saud. The only remaining remnants of the Hashemite Dynasty are the King of Jordan and those former

descendants of Iraqi monarchs when Iraq came under Hashemite rule from 1921 to 1958 and who are now in exile.

Hashids: Yemeni tribal confederation of which the current president branch is allied with.

Imam Badr: Last monarchic ruler of Yemen ascended and was deposed in 1962.

Imam Yahya: Yemen's absolute ruler from 1948 to 1962.

Iman University: Islamic radical university in the capital of Sana'a, a hotbed of jihadist recruitment in Yemen.

Ikhwan: Ultra-conservative and fanatical shock troops used by Bin Saud in his conquest and consolidation of modern Saudi Arabia.

Islah: Islamist political party in Yemen, literally means reform. Goes by the acronym YRP for Yemen Reform Party.

Khedive: Egyptian viceroy who governed Egypt, Arabia and the Levant for the Ottoman Sultan.

Madrassah: Literally school but also denotes a religious school.

Mohammed Ali Al-Idrissi: Led a revolt against British policy of disarming Yemeni tribesmen that cascaded into the 1962 revolution.

Qat: A narcotic stimulant from the *Catha edulis* plant chewed in Yemen and Somalia, Djibouti and other countries in East Africa.

Salafi: Fundamentalist and another term for Wahabi, literally return to the way of the founders of Islam (Salaf Al-Sahih).

South Arabian Federation: Formed in 1959 as a federated consortium of South Yemen's princes, sultans and tribal confederations. It ended in 1967 with the rise of Marxists in Yemen.

Takfir: Apostasy, declaring one an apostate.

Tarbiyah Schools: Schools for Islamic conduct, a Yemeni word for Islamic school madrassah.

Wahabism: An extreme form of Hanbali Sunni Islam founded in the 1740s and use as a political movement for the Bin Sauds.

YAR: Yemen Arab Republic refers to North Yemen and also Yemen during the 1990 reunification.

YRP: Yemen Reform Party also called Islah (Reform) is the Islamist party in Yemen.

YSP: Yemen Socialist Party, brought together Yemen's Marxists, communists, nationalists and secularists. Was the ruling party of communist (South) Yemen and was disbanded in 1994 after their failed attempt to secede from North Yemen.

Zeidis: A Shiite Muslim minority in Yemen.

1798; this is when Napoleon's expeditionary force invaded Egypt and easily defeated what was the crown jewel of the Ottoman Empire. The French also threatened Britain's access to its possessions and interests in India. In 1802, the British East India Company took over two islands in the southern Red Sea that straddled the strategic Bab el-Mandab Strait. Over the course of six years it became apparent these islands could not support a garrison force, and in 1808 the British negotiated with the Sultan of Lahj to gain access to the sleepy port town of Aden that was at the time one of the best natural ports in the Middle East. In 1838, two powers began vying for control of Aden; the Ottoman Sultan

had tasked his khedive (Egyptian viceroy) to assert control over Yemen. London also began debating sea-lanes of communication and determined that Aden was of significant strategic importance comparing it with the Gibraltar Strait as vital to British mercantile and seafaring interests. This led to a confrontation as a vacillating Sultan of Lahj faced Egyptian troops landing in Yemen and British forces bombarded port towns that threatened their port facilities in Aden. The Sultan of Lahj accepted a more permanent status of his province under British dominion.

The Sultan of Lahj did not rest on his laurels; through British payments he used the capital to co-opt tribes extending into the



William Henry Jackson, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

Photographer William Henry Jackson photographed the Port of Aden in December 1894.

Asir province. In 1910, the British stimulated a revolt against the Ottomans in Asir under the leadership of Mohammed Ali Al-Idrissi. This would foreshadow the infamous Arab Revolt of the Hashemites by five years, a revolt which made Lawrence of Arabia famous. In the vacuum of power left by the Ottomans and Egyptians in Arabia arose the Sherief of Mecca (The Hashemites in the Hijaz), Imam Yahya Bin Hamiduddin (Northern Yemen), the Idrissis (Northeast Yemen), Bin Saud (Central Arabia) and Bin Rashids (Northern Arabia) and the Sultan of Lahj (Aden and Southern Yemen) who dominated the Arabian Peninsula. The sheikhdoms and emirs of the Persian Gulf coast are intentionally left out of this study, as they would not play any significant part in the struggle over Yemen until after 1990. The British used this competition between tribal confederations to assert dominance on the peninsula, concluding 31 treaties with Arabian emirs and sultans in southern and eastern Arabia.

The Idrissi revolt affected the port of Hodeidah and on the eve of the revolt which took place during World War I, an accepted patronage from England and Italy saw a diminishing Ottoman power from its ascendance in East Africa. The Ottomans had issued a jihad against foreigners and their allies in Arabia and although it was not successful in Mecca, Medina and in central Arabia, it found resonance in Yemen. Ali Said Pasha was so successful in radicalizing the tribes for the Ottoman cause that he was able to push British forces into the enclave of Aden. The tactic that

defeated Ali Said Pasha was the use of Imam Yahya who argued that Yemen was not for the British or Ottomans but the Arabs. Arab nationalism eroded Ali Said Pasha's (an Ottoman) influence and saw England supporting a treaty with Imam Yahya as monarch of Yemen, which concluded in 1920. Factors that drove Imam Yahya to accept Aden as a British protectorate were:

■ The encroachment of Ibn Saud, whose fanatical Wahabi Ikhwan shock troops

defeated the Hashmites of Mecca and attacked Yemen.

■ Bin Saud had taken Asir province. (The root of the struggle between Bin Saud and Imam Yahya is at its core a religious one. The Saudis are Wahabi Sunni Muslims; the Imam of Yemen was a Shiite Zeidi.) Today's borders in the Arabian Peninsula be it Kuwait, Qatar, Iraq or Yemen were imposed by British guns from its fleet and planes threatening the forces of Bin Saud.

■ British biplanes bombed and strafed Yemeni tribes threatening the Zeidi Shiite tribal minority in Yemen and also used airpower to evict Imam Yahya's forces from Aden leading the Imam to agree to a protectorate over his realm in 1934.

1954-1967: Nasserists and Marxists Explode in Yemen

Yemen was not immune to self-determination movements that cropped up after World War II in Africa and Asia. Britain came away from its triumph over Hitler with staggering debt and could no longer maintain protectorates like Aden. In 1954, the Governor General of Aden invited the South Arabian emirs and potentates to redraw the protectorate arrangements of Southern Arabia. In 1959, they formed the South Arabian Federation made up of seven entities (The British Protectorate of Aden along with Beihan, Al-Dalaa, Al-Fadhly, Auzly, Yafei and Awaleq). Despite the agreement reached by these sultanates and emirs, the Yemeni army and intelligentsia educated in the universities of Cairo and Beirut saw this arrangement in the context

of Nasserism and the Algerian struggle for independence from France. The South Arabian Federation was just another means of British colonization, particularly since the federation included the British Protectorate of Aden. Their frustration was also compounded by the despotic rule of Imam Ahmed (a descendant of Imam Yahya), and this exploded into a revolt in September 1962 on the eve of Iman Badr's ascension to the throne.

The answer from London to attacks on Yemeni allies was to disarm the tribes, which only made matters worse and caused tribesmen to take to the Ridfan Mountains. British forces responded with a combined air and mechanized infantry assault on the Ridfan Mountains to smoke out the guerilla leader Ghaleb Bin Rajeh Labuzah, who did not comprehend revolutionary politics but was angered over British disarmament policy. The Labuzah revolt of 1962 caused an incitement of more tribes, and in late 1962 early 1963, Arab nationalists and Nasserists took over the revolt. Labuzah brought together factions including Islamic fundamentalists with their jihadist fighters from the Yafei and Al-Dalaa tribal confederation and nationalist revolutionaries who formed the Nationalist Front committed to getting British forces out of Aden.

Egypt extended aid and support to the National Front (also called Septemberists). Joining the Yemeni uprisings were Palestinians such as George Habbash and Nayef Hawatmeh, who had met while college students in Beirut and become advisors to Yemeni Marxists and nationalists. Four anti-British groups emerged:

- ☐ Popular Socialist Party,
- ☐ Sons of Southern Arabia,
- ☐ National Union Party, and
- ☐ Nationalist Front.

Egypt's fiery leader Gamal Abdel-Nasser's interest in nurturing revolution in Yemen was designed to evict the British from Aden and topple old style Arab monarchies, which the Imam Badr represented. This alarmed the Saudis, and it is not a coincidental mistake that the World Muslim League (*Rabitat Al-Alam Al-Islami*) was formed in 1962 as a response to the republican uprising in Yemen. The

republicans had several demands among them: democracy and the nullification of all British treaties with Yemen's sheikhs and sultans.

Egypt began at first arming, and then extended military and financial aid to the Republican officers that swept away Imam Badr on September 26, 1962. The Imam took to the hills of Northern Yemen to foment and undertake tribal levies and fight the army officers that removed him from power. This civil war between the Imam (royalists) and army revolutionaries (republicans) lasted from 1962 to 1967 and would evolve into Egypt's Vietnam absorbing 60,000 Egyptian troops. The war would see Egypt supporting the republicans (led by Colonel Abdallah Sallal) and Saudi Arabia, Israel, France, Jordan and Britain supporting the royalists (led by Imam Badr and his uncle Prince Hassan). As the struggle raged, Egypt resorted to bombing the Saudi logistical center of Najran and also used chemical weapons in a desperate attempt to demoralize royalist guerillas and tribes.

In 1965, a convention to reconcile ideological differences of the National Front was convened in Sana'a; this would be a turning point as the republican movement split into Nasserist, Marxist, Democratic, Socialist, and Baathist factions. While republicans focused on winning the war in North Yemen, the leftists supported by Egypt, split away from the Nationalist Front and formed a Liberation Front focusing their efforts in Aden; this evolved into Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY).

Clandestine contacts were made between FLOSY and the Soviet Union via the Sudanese Communist Party. The Sudanese Communists provided a link to Arab nationalists in Cairo and Moscow, providing FLOSY millions of dollars in clandestine Soviet military aid. The leaders of Yemen's communist movement and their Arab communist backers saw themselves as a third alternative, a rejection to the Nasserist trend that overtook Egypt and Baathism that overtook Iraq and Syria. Egypt attempted to control the whirlwind hosting a series of conferences between the National Front and FLOSY in Alexandria, Egypt, and in Yemen.

1967-1974 Islamist Radicals Fight Communism in Yemen

When one analyzes how jihadism entered the struggle for power in Yemen, three incidents must be highlighted. The first was the crushing defeat of Arab armies in the daring Israeli aerial attack on Egypt, Syria and Jordan in the 1967 Six-Day War. The defeat was so decisive it called into question the validity of Arab nationalism and Egypt's Pan-Arab vision represented by Nasser. This drew thousands away from such Pan-Arab ideologies towards the slogan "Islam is the solution" to socio-political problems. This is the period when Al-Qaeda ideologue Ayman Al-Zawahiri threw himself into jihad as the only solution to problems in the Arab world. Arabs flocked to mosques for answers and a few towards Islamist radical groups like the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. The second is the use of Islam to fight Nasser's troops in Yemen and Republican Yemeni forces from 1962-1967. The third was when FLOSY evicted British forces and declared Aden the first and only communist nation in the Arab world. The Democratic People's Republic of Yemen (DPRY) was created in 1967. The

communist Yemenis immediately set about liquidating hundreds of clerics and imams. Many died in brutal ways including dragging their live bodies through the streets of Aden, Lahij, and other towns in southern (communist) Yemen on the back of vehicles. Yemenis were indignant by the closure of the Islamic University in Aden. The republicans in Sana'a saw in this outrage an opportunity to support Islamist insurgents to destabilize the communist south. The Yemeni branch of the Muslim Brotherhood called on members from the Arab world to come to Sana'a and fight a jihad against the atheist Yemeni communist regime in the south. This would be a foreshadow of how the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan would be fought seven years before it occurred. Many of the *Ulama* (Islamic clergy) in North Yemen fled to the city of Taiz, where they established a base of Islamist resistance against communism. This echoes what occurred in Peshawar in Pakistan during the Soviet-Afghan War. The Yemeni Islamic resistance groups were led by the fiery cleric Sheikh Abdel-Mejid Al-Zindani, leader of the Yemeni faction of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Arabic sources describe the complex internal struggle Yemen's ideological factions (nationalist, communist, islamist and baathist) and the gradual formation of two major factions before the two Yemen's split in 1967. The ideological struggle settled on Marxism in the south and Islamism in the north. In 1969, an internal communist (Yemeni) struggle revolved around implementation of the Maoist (agricultural) model or the Leninist (industrial) model. This communist divide was settled in favor of Moscow versus Beijing but would be a source of tension and sow the seeds for a potential coup in later years.

By 1972, the north and south fought skirmishes along the border and undertook guerilla strikes in urban centers. Despite claims and counter-claims including false accusations of the Saudis stimulating the north to attack the south, it turned out that the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR-North) Majlis Al-Shura (parliament) had made a conscience decision to reunify the north and south by force. In 1974, seizing on the chaos, 30-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Ibrahim Al-Hamdi took power in North Yemen in a military coup. Important aspects of Al-Hamdi's regime was that he had leveraged the expulsion of Soviet advisors from Egypt in 1973 and the military focus of Moscow on Aden into a \$138 million arms deal with the U.S., which was to be financed by the Saudis. Accepting Saudi money meant that Al-Hamdi had given up Yemen's autonomy and spent a great deal of time reclaiming Sana'a independence from Riyadh. Accepting Saudi funds also meant an increased level of Wahabi evangelism and Al-Hamdi could never ignore the cold fact that Saudi funds helped him maintain central control of the tribes and at the end the tribes were more loyal to Saudi money than his own authority. What brought Al-Hamdi to power in June 1974 was a stepped up attack by southern communist insurgents on the north to include assassinations of republican government officials and officers in Sana'a as well as bombings of urban centers. Al-Hamdi responded by cultivating the Islamist movement and the Muslim Brotherhood as an easy means of financing a proxy army against communist infiltrators. He allowed more control by the Muslim Brotherhood, Salafists and Wahabis to create schools, preach incitement against communism in the mosque and conduct guerilla attacks in Aden

and throughout South (communist) Yemen. Like Afghanistan, no central government could control the well-armed tribes. Yemen is a perfect breeding ground for Islamist militancy then and now.

Sheikh Al-Zindani represented the new force in North Yemen's politics. As leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, he and such Islamist clerics as Imam Yahya bin Fahseel created jihadist guerilla units that incited, terrorized, assassinated and evangelized in communist South Yemen. Al-Zindani's *Tarbiah* Schools became the forerunner of the madrassahs in Pakistan and gave the Muslim Brotherhood a steady stream of recruits. Complicating matters was Saudi assistance and the discovery of Algerian president Houari Boumediene providing intelligence to communist Yemen. Al-Hamdi wanting to free his nation from Saudi dominance began in 1977 exploring rapprochement with the communist DPRY government in Aden. In October 1977, a few hours before traveling to Aden to begin talks on potential unification he was assassinated. It was never determined who was responsible. Previous attempts on Al-Hamdi included a failed assassination by Major Zaid Kasbi, a new convert to militant salafism after being disappointed by Nassrism. In June 1978, his successor Ahmad Al-Ghashmi was brutally assassinated by his southern-DPRY counterpart Salem Rubbiyah, when he sent him an envoy suicide bomber that killed himself and Al-Ghashmi. The Central Communist Committee of South Yemen discovered Rubiyyah's plans to undertake a revolution to return the DPRY to a Maoist form of communism and unify Yemen by force. They had Rubiyyah killed.

Arabic sources from North Yemen blame the KGB, East German Stasi for the urban bombings and assassination campaigns in the North. Al-Ghashmi's assassination saw the ascension of the current president, former Colonel Ali Abdullah Al-Saleh in 1978. From 1972 to 1979, the communist South launched three major invasions of the North. In that time, Libya, Cuba, China, USSR and East Bloc nations supported the DPRY and the Gulf nations, U.S., NATO allies supported the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR).

1979-1989 Jihadist Yemeni Islamists Fight in The Afghan War

What is fascinating about the Soviet-

What is fascinating about the Soviet-Afghan War is that it globalizes Islamist militancy. For the first time Egyptians, Algerians, Saudis, Yemenis and all Arabs who fought in Afghanistan shared a common experience in fighting the Soviet Army. It was a convenient way to dump troublemakers while fighting communism. The Soviet-Afghan War was a conflict made for jihad, the Cold War, and Arab governments eager to rid themselves of agitators and violent militants.

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From the Yemeni perspective, Southern Yemenis, who chafed under the communist yoke, were eager to have a crack at the superpower that enabled their oppressive regime to exist. Many of these veterans returned to Yemen and formed what would become known today as the Islamic Army of Aden (IAA), an Al-Qaeda affiliate. One of the best chapters that explains the evolution of the Islamic Army of Aden appears in Jonathan Schanzer's book *Al-Qaeda's Armies: Middle East Affiliate Groups and the Next Generation of Terror* (Washington DC: Brookings Press, 2004). The Yemeni veterans of the Soviet-Afghan War returned intoxicated with victory and were convinced that the fall of the Soviet Union was due to their efforts. Many settled in both North and South Yemen and set about building para-military training camps and preparing for violence against the regime.

The days of the Democratic People's Republic of South Yemen were numbered; no longer sponsored by the Soviets, their

only salvation was for Ali Al-Beidh, the communist chairman, to seek unification with Sana'a. Another problem that would hasten the collapse of DPRY was best expressed by Sanaa's governor about the importation of weapons from 1967 to 1994 into Yemen, which left three guns for every Yemeni citizen — more than 80 million firearms. The gun has replaced the *jambiyyah* (curved Yemeni dagger) as an inextricable part of Yemen's masculine culture. In addition, similar to the Pakistan-Afghan border that has a thriving weapons industry, the Yemeni economy thrives on being a weapons shopping bazaar for East and Central African nations.

Aside from establishing paramilitary groups, the Afghan veterans also allied themselves with a new political entity in North Yemen. The *Islah* (Reform) Party, is the second most popular party after the regime's General Congress Party, but one could argue that Islah, an Islamist Party, is the core constituents of Yemen's current president. Formed by Shiekh Al-Zindani, who was head of the Muslim Brotherhood in Yemen, and a specially designated terrorist by Washington, Islah is an islamo-tribal party founded in 1990. Al-Zindani, the cleric, and Hussein Al-Ahmar, leader of the Hashid Tribal Confederacy (the same tribe of the president), would bring together Islamist radical, tribal, and influence into Yemen's political landscape. It is estimated 20 percent of the Islah Party has ties to Islamist militant groups including Al-Qaeda. This group would be very useful during Yemen's 1994 war of succession.

Other developments not directly related to the Soviet-Afghan War but occurred during the decade long conflict was Yemeni military power projection. Based on a 1987 request of Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, Yemeni leader Ali Abdullah Al-Saleh sent a few hundred troops to Libya to aid in the Chad conflict, which Libyan forces were losing. Yemeni forces fought alongside Libyans in Chad from 1987-1990, the Yemeni military presence rose from a few hundred to one division. In 1989, the issue of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) was brought forth by Iraqi despot Saddam Hussein. In hindsight, this was a ruse by Saddam to focus Arab attention from his invasion of Kuwait, garner Arab alliances, and add pressure to

the Gulf Cooperation Council into forgiving billions in debt accumulated over the decade long Iran-Iraq War. To the Yemeni socialists this was seen as an opportunity to check the growing influence of Islamic fundamentalists in Yemen by joining in a socialist-baathist alliance. Operation Desert Storm and Egypt's lack of enthusiasm for the ACC killed this project proposed by Iraq's despot for establishing collective links with Yemen, Egypt, and Syria.

1990-1993 Unification and Constitutional Crisis

Among the more important aspects of Yemen's current political history is the unification on May 22, 1990, of North and South Yemen. What is significant was how the tribal, Islamist, democratic and Marxists reconciled their differences to ensure that Yemen did not split apart. This would be short-lived and secession occurred in 1994.

Soon after the 1990 unification, communist Yemenis led by former DPRY President Ali Al-Beidh, who under unification became Yemen Arab Republic vice president, looked into several issues to check the growing influence of Islamist militants and their Islah Party. Among the concessions granted to Al-Beidh:

- ☐ Retaining the military formations and defense establishments of South Yemen, and
- ☐ Keeping the socialist constitution and the use of secular ideals to check Islamist radicals and militants.

Amazingly it was not the retention of the military assets in the South that was opposed by Shiekh Al-Zindani but the issue of the constitution that rankled him and his Islamist radicals in Yemen. Al-Zindani organized street violence and opposition to the constitution and felt this would distance his vision of forming an Islamist state in Yemen. The matter involved street violence and was resolved by a constitutional referendum in May 1991 in which out of 1.8 million ballots cast, 1.3 million voted for the constitution. This aspect of Yemen's political history is very revealing as it shows the jihadist and Islamist radicals fear of constitutional governance; it also demonstrates the majority of Yemeni citizens both in the North and South wanted representative government. The next struggle that would lead to the 1994 Yemen War of Secession dealt with movements and control over the armed forces, trade, and diplomacy.

According to Arabic sources, Vice President Beidh began a consolidation of the armed forces designed to protect his political parties. Special forces, infantry and armored divisions were moved around Yemen and positioned based on reliability. In addition, the Marxists controlled diplomatic appointments and shaped Yemen's foreign policy more than the North. Technically in 1990, North and South were united, but factually the nation was still divided with Marxists guarding their interests. Another point of contention was the control of the lucrative weapons market. Between 1990 and 1994, Yemen cleared its arsenals of antiquated small arms and light assault weapons selling them to militias in Somalia, no doubt complicating Operation Restore Hope and the United Nations mission in Mogadishu. They also sold to Saudi, Omani tribesman, and arms merchants. Among the threats to the former Marxists was Shiekh Al-Zindani and his Islamist Islah Party. In September 1993 the Marxists attempted and failed to

assassinate Al-Zindani at his home, and there was also a failed attempt to kill President Saleh's brother using explosives.

When looking into U.S. military operations in Somalia, the focus is on that country and not peripheral nations that served as a support base for Operation Restore Hope. The agreement by President Saleh to allow U.S. forces access to Aden in support of operations in Somalia set off a fascinating political battle between Saleh and Vice President Beidh. Beidh wanted to demonstrate that President Saleh did not have the right to provide Aden as a base for U.S. forces and was outraged that his Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) apparatus and security were not charged with protecting U.S. troops in Aden. The Yemeni vice president was bolstered in his claims when terrorists conducted near simultaneous bombings of the Movenpick and Gold Mohur hotels, where U.S. forces were billeting in 1992. The former Marxist and Socialist apparatus took charge of the investigation but had their own agenda to embarrass President Saleh and undermine Islamist militants, who were the main suspects of the bombings. This may explain why the perpetrators of this attack were never brought to justice. YSP worked with the Egyptian socialists to identify and undermine Islamists in Yemen. The Egyptian government was willing to take members of Egyptian Islamic Jihad captured in Yemen, but Cairo was frustrated when the Yemenis seized the opportunity to get rid of Egyptian laborers not involved in terrorism.

1994: Yemen War of Secession

The thread of cultural ties unified Yemen in 1990, but cultural and social ties do not guarantee political union. The two Yemens instead of working towards integration in 1990, used the time to undermine one another in a path towards total dominance of Yemen. Through this an opportunity existed for the Islamist Islah Party (aka the Yemen Reform Group or YRG) to begin its own influence on the ruling General Congress Party and seek its own agenda of an Islamist state in Yemen. The Marxist Prime Minister Abu Bakr Al-Attas saw trouble ahead; in June 1990 he warned the unified government and members of his own party that although he welcomed the Muslim Brotherhood in the political process on condition that they ceased calling other political parties at the Yemen Socialist Party kafir's (apostates) and the encouragement of death that comes with it. The impact of Prime Minister Al-Attas observations about *takfir* (declaration of apostasy) would come take shape in a series of assassination of YSP officials from 1991 to May 1994 (the outbreak of the war of secession). This included the use of rockets to attack the homes of YSP officials, despite complaints to President Saleh, he blamed the attacks on "foreign elements." Attacks and assassination patterns are revealing and focused on the speaker of the house, members of the judiciary, Prime Minister Al-Attas and Vice President Beidh as well as leaders who were deemed secular. It all had the mark of jihadist target selection to undermine major political figures and schools they feared were secularizing Yemen.

The decision of Vice President Beidh to secede from North Yemen was not taken lightly but was meticulously planned. Before he withdrew to Aden in August 1993, he and his YSP along with their Nationalist and Marxist allies controlled:

- Under half of Yemen's ground forces,

- All coastal patrol forces,
- A bulk of the inventory of Yemen's SCUD missiles,
- A majority of the air force, and
- Six provinces that represented the larger part of Yemen's total land mass.

When President Saleh attempted to score a quick victory by invading Aden, his regular forces found the southern Yemeni forces putting up stiff resistance and using their air force to strafe northern formations advancing on Aden. Saleh turned to supplementing the regular army with tribes and (jihadist) militia. Clerics (through the Islah Party) issued *fatwas* (religious edicts) prohibiting reconciliation with the southern secessionists and sanctioning their killing. This also served to push out the other political parties in Yemen in favor of North Yemen's policy of using force to reunify the country. This in turn, meant a greater reliance by President Saleh on tribe and religion to solve internal crisis. Control of armories was relatively easy in both North and South Yemen, as tribes from such places as the Empty Quarter would show up at government armories and help themselves to the stockpile of weapons. Demonstrating the ease of access to weapons, the YSP before secession uncovered a plot to attack U.S. aircraft using shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles taken from the 10th Air Defense Division. On May 21, 1994, Beidh declared Aden and his six provinces independent. The war lasted until July 1994, with northern forces allied with Islamist jihadist groups tactically making the right choice attacking Aden to remove the center of gravity from power, (Secessionist President Beidh). It was relatively easy for President Saleh to portray Beidh and the socialists as renegades and spoiling the unification of Yemen, which had been an aspiration of the Yemeni people for decades. What characterizes this war of succession was the use of armor, MiGs and the socialist deployment of SCUD missiles against the Yemeni capital Sana'a. In May 1994, the south fired 20 SCUD missiles at Sana'a causing the north to retaliate by firing surface-to-surface missiles at the port city of Aden.

North Yemen triumphed over the

separatists because of several factors which included:

■ **Legitimacy:** North Yemen forces were fighting to keep the country together. This was their central cause and powerful one.

■ **Popular support:** Northern forces had the backing and support of the people, even when they moved into the seceded southern and eastern governorates. Residents of these governorates refused to enlist in the army of the separatists, thus depriving them of a badly needed manpower. Residents also guided the Northern forces to the hideouts and camps of the separatists and showed them where mines and ambushes were prepared.

■ **Financial enticements of YSP troops:** The commanders of the separatist (YSP) forces knew their politicians were receiving generous contributions in cash and arms from some of the neighboring nations (the Saudis). These funds did not filter through to the unit commanders and their soldiers. Using propaganda and financial inducements these forces saw no reason to sacrifice for separatist politicians craving power. On October 14, the Madram, the 56th Infantry, the 122nd Mechanized, the 22nd Infantry, the 4th Artillery camps, as well as the rocket base in Shabwah, all defected. Millions has been paid out to buy the allegiance of unit commanders and their assistants in those camps, as well as to the tribal sheikhs and community elders to facilitate in the advance of Northern forces.

■ **Unity of command:** President Saleh had unity of command and control over northern forces (regular and irregular). The southern separatists had a divided leadership; Beidh escaped Aden early in the war and fled to Oman leaving an ill-prepared Abd al-Rahim Al-Jifri in charge. Tribes loyal to the separatists did not work in tandem with regular forces and a splintered separatist leadership cost them in terms of battlefield performance.

Jonathan Schanzer writes in his book that President Saleh also relied on using Islamist militants as irregular shock-troops in this war of succession. This makes sense, as the Islah Party represented the president's tribe and formed a staunch base of support and the

use of Islamist insurgents against the communist south has a long history in Yemen. The Yemen War of Secession is not politically straight forward; according to *Washington Post* reporter Nora Boustany, Beidh grew tired of relentless political assassinations of his socialists that were likely sanctioned by the government in Sana'a. Her article "POWs in Yemen Hoping for Peace," which appeared in the May 14, 1994 issue, quotes Beidh who remarked that at least 153 of his supporters had been assassinated in Sana'a. The Islah (Islamist) Party viewed the YSP with disdain and abhorred the liberal and secular politics. Many of the YSP members sought asylum in Saudi Arabia as part of the Saudi policy of keeping Yemen divided and weak. There are those academics who argue that had southern Yemen triumphed over President Saleh and the Islah Party it would have been a major defeat for Islamist militants. Yet those who counter these arguments remark that in April 1993, both President Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) and Islah dominated seats in parliament marginalizing the Yemen Socialist Party and Beidh felt compelled to address this erosion of political power through force. Islamist militants used the refugee crisis created by the war to infiltrate the city of Aden, create unrest and put pressure on the city's fragile (secessionist) authorities to keep public order.

What the South Yemen Secessionist Army Did Right

A factor that made a difference in the 1994 Civil War was airpower. At the opening of the war, the south had air supremacy and used it to counter North Yemen's numerical superiority. The secessionist south had 120 combat aircraft and the north had only 60 MiGs and 12 F-5Es. The south's air superiority was quickly eroded by their use of the air force as its main arm against Sana'a and experienced losses to anti-air fire. The largest and most successful air attack was against an oil refinery across from Aden harbor. The south concentrated not on attacking cities but in dulling the mass formations of northern armor using MiG-29s and Mi-24 helicopter gun ships. The North had no attack helicopters.

Regional Machiavellian Aspects of the 1994 War of Succession

The Yemen Civil War offers a useful lesson in the complex and often surprising web of alliances and interests of different Arab states. Saudis at first glance may want to see pro-Islamist, tribal and conservative north defeat the secular and Marxist south. Yet the Saudis placed a higher value on a divided Yemen and backed Beidh and the secessionist government in Aden. Riyadh also wished to even the score for President Saleh's support of Saddam Hussein during the 1990-1991 Gulf War. The Saudis pressed hard for a cease-fire to give time for the south to stabilize itself. Egypt and United Arab Emirates shared the Saudi view but for different reasons. A divided Yemen was seen as a means of undermining President Saleh and his growing sympathy for jihadists that threatened Egypt and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members. Sudan and Iran backed North Yemen against the secessionist south; they coveted a unified Yemen that was estranged from the GCC and purged of liberal secularists such as the YSP. The removal of the YSP would create more political space for the Islamist Islah Party; for Iran it also meant diverting Saudi attention southward. Among inter-Arab and inter-Islamic rivalries, the war of secession in Yemen brought out Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and most GCC nations except Qatar supporting the secular south and the destabilizing states of Iraq (as payment for Yemen's support during Operation Desert Storm), Libya, Sudan and Iran supporting the conservative north.

To understand the impact of Saudi funding of southern (secessionist) Yemen, Jane's Worldwide Arms Deliveries (Report) for 1994 shows that South Yemeni secessionists received 56 T-62 main battle tanks from Bulgaria, seven BMPs, 220mm multiple rocket launchers and 12 MIG-29 "Fulcrum" fighters from Moldova, all of which required funding that Jane's link to the Saudis. With Saudi government support of secessionists, this emboldened the Shiite Zeidi's of the North, who made up most of the officer corps and feared Wahabi influence. The United States worked towards a peaceful reunification of Yemen and refused to recognize the secessionist government despite prodding from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. In the Arab world, the U.S. is viewed as a divisive force among Arab states, but America cites this as a clear example of encouraging unity.

The miscalculation of supporting Saddam Hussein so angered Saudi Arabia that they expelled thousands of Yemeni migrant workers which deprived unified Yemen of needed remittances and access to hard currency. It also meant under a million unemployed Yemenis were idle and some ripe for radicalism and influence by Yemen's Islamist militants who thrive under such economic and social instability. While the South postured reliable southern units closer to Aden and towards the approaches to Sana'a, North Yemen used the chaos as a process of moving more and more individual soldiers and officers to units in the South (Aden). Relations between Saudi Arabia and Yemen cannot be viewed only as between the official governments of Riyadh and Sana'a but also in context of alliances between the Saudis and tribal confederations, such as the Al-Ahmar family and Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmar who is leader of the

Hashid tribal confederation in Yemen and co-founder of the islamo-feudalist political party Islah. Charles Dunbar, a noted Yemen scholar, argues that Yemen is still largely a rural country and the Islamist militant movement draws from disaffected youth who are living in the countryside away from the cities. Yemen does not suffer from a large pool of unemployed intellectuals that also serve as middle and top cadre of Islamist militancy in Cairo, Algiers, and Teheran. This observation is debatable as Persian Gulf states led by Saudi Arabia punished Yemen for Iraqi support. This has displaced less than a million Yemeni workers, many returning to Yemen. This creates a climate that Islamist militants have already thrived on as evidenced by the attack on the USS *Cole* and French tanker *Limburg*.

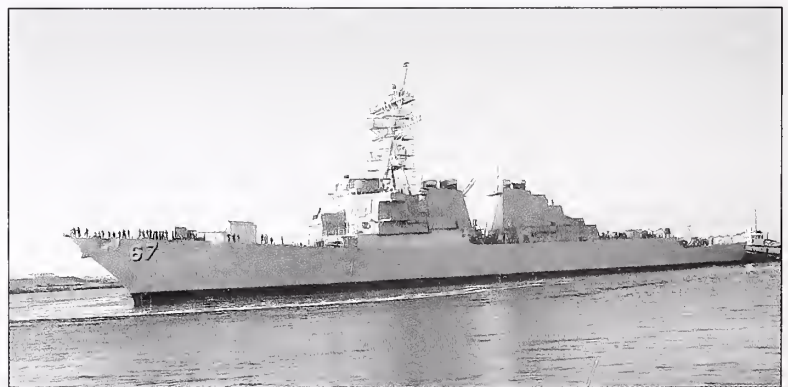
In a previous section of this study, there was a discussion on how Saudi borders were dictated by British naval and air forces intervening against fanatical Saudi Ikhwan shock troops after World War I. Today, one can see a modern version of Saudi hegemony, the Gulf States of Kuwait, the UAE, and Qatar as well as Yemen all concern themselves with how much influence Saudi Arabia has politically and economically in the region. Some regional Gulf States make alliances with external powers including the United States to gain a degree of autonomy from Saudi Arabia's political and economic size as well as Iranian encroachment of its brand of religious radicalism in the Persian Gulf. Saudi Arabia's Yemen policy follows a simple logic and it is to:

- ☐ Keep Yemen neutral, if not leaning towards Saudi policies (checking Arab Nationalism and political liberalization in the Persian Gulf;

- ☐ Keep Yemen weak and divided; and

- ☐ Keep Yemen (especially the North) economically dependent.

In 1994, the Saudi armed forces positioned troops along its border. It is not clear what Saudi military intentions were except posturing to influence the Yemen War of Succession and deal with the possible aftermath of a northern retaliation for Saudi support of the Aden (southern secessionists). From a military vantage point, it would be interesting to deduce who would win in a conflict between Yemen and Saudi Arabia. The Yemenis enjoy a harder working and experienced fighters in their armed forces, as well as a larger ground force. However the Saudis have a technological



Department of Defense photo

The USS Cole was attacked October 12, 2000, while it was harbored in the Yemeni port of Adeu. Seventeen sailors were killed in the attack.

advantage in such arms as the F-16 and anti-air defense systems. One can speculate about the level of technological competence of the Saudi armed forces and employment of their navy and air force in a war against Yemen. Experience has shown that Yemen bogged down an Egyptian expeditionary force from 1962 to 1967 when the country was divided. In a Saudi-Yemen conflict there is an added complexity of southern Saudi tribes with close tribal ties to their Yemeni counterparts along their common border. In addition, there are Islamist militant elements within Saudi Arabia that are currently actively engaged in insurgent operations throughout the country. If Yemen and Saudi Arabia were to open hostilities, it would likely involve the support of proxy Islamist radicals within Saudi Arabia and Yemen. War gaming and modeling this scenario would be a useful exercise.

Conclusion

Sheikh Al-Zindani continues to influence Yemen's politics and has garnered additional influence in the world of Islamist militancy. A former veteran of the Soviet-Afghan wars, he has contacts with Al-Qaeda, runs the Al Iman University, a hotbed of jihadist education, and also heads the Islah political party. In February 24, 2004, the U.S. Treasury Department designated Sheikh Al-Zindani, a loyalist to Usama bin Laden and supporter of al-Qaeda, a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under the authority of Executive Order 13224 and the International Emergency Economic Powers Act. According to the Treasury Department press release, Al-Zindani served as a contact for Ansar al-Islam (AI), a Kurdish-based terrorist organization linked to al-Qaeda, which is included in the UN 1267 sanctions Committee list. As founder of the Al Iman University in Sana'a, he has more than 5,000 enrollees and counts among his alumni John Walker Lindh (so-called American Taliban) before he joined the Taliban. By understanding how Islamist militancy is an integral part of Yemen's internal struggles, U.S. policymakers can begin to delve into the range of options in the U.S.-Yemen relationship. With this in mind military planners should consider:

1. Understanding that Islamist militant

organizations have undertaken a policy of finding a niche as an irregular force multiplier in regional conflicts. This is seen in Yemen, and was seen in such places as Somalia, Sudan, and Afghanistan under the Taliban. Al-Qaeda affiliates bring to local warlords and leaders of lawless regions an option to counter opposition. In the case of Yemen, the jihadists were used to undermine the socialists.

2. *Once jihadists have triumphed over a regional threat, local leaders must be made to understand the next phase is setting up an Islamic government in their image.* This means that with the Yemen Socialist Party gone, it is only a matter of time before Islamist militants begin attacking the ruling General People's Congress. Once a settlement is reached between the Palestinian Authority and Israel, organizations such as Hamas will become the main competitor to control of any new Palestinian state.

3. *Like Mullah Omar in Afghanistan who refused to give up Osama Bin Laden for a variety of financial, marital and military ties, the current Yemeni regime refuses to give up Sheikh Al-Zindani because his Islah Party is an umbrella that gives power to the ruling president's tribe as well as Islamist militants.* Al-Zindani, like any politician, knows the balance keeps the Yemeni government powerless to apprehend him.

4. *The use of proxy Islamist militant fighters is not only restricted to the history of Afghanistan, Somalia and Kashmir but is predated by conflicts in Yemen.* Al-Qaeda uses the historical precedent of the internal struggle in Yemen as one of several models to have a growing encroachment on a weak central government.

5. *Islamist militant groups will oppose any constitution that guarantees the rights of all citizens despite a majority wanting constitutional governance.* In the early '90s Yemen voted by a margin of 98 percent to have constitution that would unify secular southern and northern conservatives in Yemen. Sheikh Al-Zindani and his Islamist radicals used mob violence to dissuade the public from adopting a constitutional form of government. He failed, but his zeal can be seen today in dealing with suicidal jihadist groups in Iraq who use intimidation to deny

suffrage for Iraqis. This is not a new tactic.

6. *The proliferation of weapons in Yemen has graduated from small arms to armor and missiles.* The 1994 Yemen War of Secession saw both sides firing surface-to-surface missiles and over 20 SCUDs at one another. The future of a Yemen in crisis is possibly the turning of these missiles on international shipping lanes along the strategic Bab-el-Mandab Strait. The denial of the strait would have an impact on Suez Canal traffic and the economies of many nations in the region, not to mention a shock to world oil prices.

7. *Instability in Yemen could invite external powers to intervene such as Sudan and Iran who would prop up any Islamist radical takeover.* Saudi government policy to undermine Islamist militants could be eroded by a Saudi public supportive of Islamist radicals in Sana'a. Unsettled issues between Yemen and Saudi Arabia include the status of the Asir Province, which rages whenever there is stress between the two nations.

8. *Conduct war-gaming if Yemen and Saudi Arabia were to open hostilities and the impact of involving proxy Islamist radicals within Saudi Arabia and vice versa within Yemen in such a conflict.* War-gaming and modeling this scenario would be a useful exercise for U.S. military planners.

9. *Address aggressively the issue of Tarbiah schools.* Tarbiah schools have morphed today into hundreds of unlicensed Islamist schools that are incubators for Islamist militants. In 1992, the government passed a law forcing the closure of unlicensed schools; the law was likely supported by the YSP before the party was destroyed in 1994. The law remains on the books but is not enforced by the current government.

LCDR Youssef Aboul-Enein served as Middle East Policy Advisor at the Office of the Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs from 2002 to 2006. He currently is a Middle East Defense Department Analyst.

Author's notes: LCDR Aboul-Enein wishes to thank his colleague LTC Rudolph Atallah, USAF, for editing and offering valuable comments that enhanced this work. In addition, the author wishes to acknowledge the Pentagon librarians for providing access to various volumes on conflicts in Yemen.

Small Arms Ammunition

KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SHOOTING

Editor's Note: This article first appeared in the June 2007 issue of *PS, The Preventive Maintenance Monthly*.

Dear *PS* Editor,

I am a quality assurance specialist ammunition (QASAS) in Iraq and have encountered several problems that Soldiers should be warned about:

- * Soldiers are modifying weapons or using unauthorized weapons. Both practices are prohibited because a modified or unauthorized weapon could be unreliable and unsafe. That endangers the Soldier and his unit.

- * Soldiers are using unauthorized ammo in their weapons. I've found Italian, Romanian, and Yugoslavian ammo in Soldiers' magazines. Some Soldiers didn't even realize they were using unauthorized ammo. Unauthorized ammo can't be relied on and shouldn't be used. Use only the approved ammo you get through the Army supply system.

- * Soldiers should remember to protect ammo as much as possible from the heat and sun, which of course is very difficult in the Iraq desert. The hotter ammo gets, the faster its propellant burns, which means greater pressure inside the weapon. If ammo has been exposed to high heat, let it cool before firing it.

- * The British 5.56mm round should be used only for training with the M16-series rifle, M4/M4A1 carbine and M249 machine gun. In fact, it's good to use for training since that saves U.S. ammo for combat.

The British round leaves more powder residue, which causes the weapon to jam if it's not cleaned frequently. The British ammo is stamped on its base with either L2A2 or L1A2. After firing British ammo, clean your weapon and then re-zero it using U.S. ammo. That way you'll hit what you're aiming at!

* Many Soldiers don't

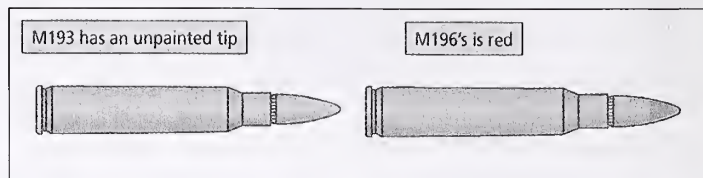


Figure 1

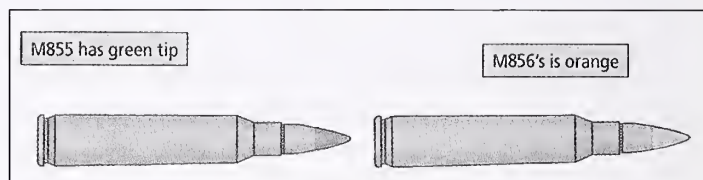


Figure 2

realize there are different types of ammo for each weapon and that some types work better than others. It would be a good idea for *PS* to educate Soldiers on what ammo is best to use.

— Jeffrey Dykeman
Iraq

PS Editor's Note:

Excellent points, Jeff. Now let's start the education on what Soldiers should use in the M16/M16A1, the M16A2/M16A4 and M4/M4A1, and the M249:

M16/M16A1 (Figure 1)

The M16/M16A1 is designed to shoot M193 (ball) and M196 (tracer) cartridges. Because the M16/M16A1 has a one turn in 12 inches twist, it can't accurately shoot the heavier bullets used in the M16A2/M4-series. You can ID M193 cartridges by the unpainted bullet tips and M196s by their red tips.

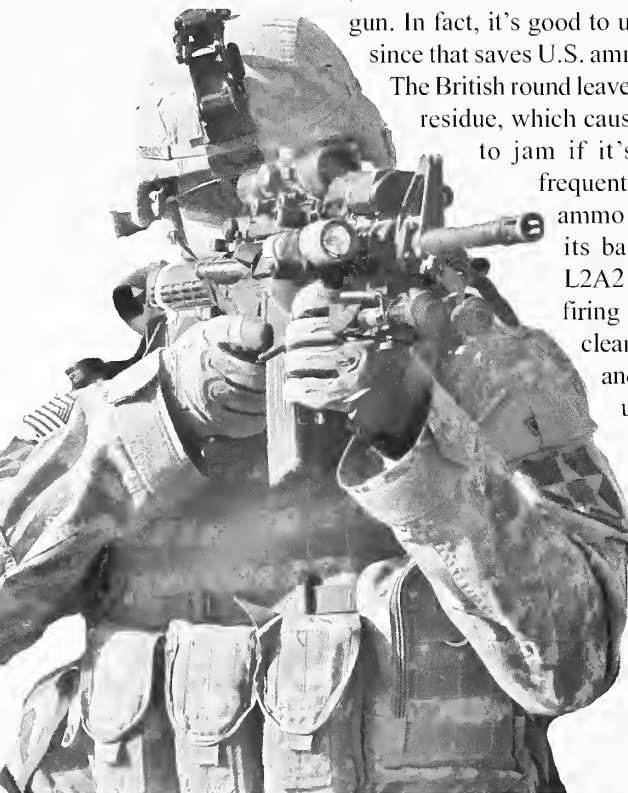
M16A2/M16A4, M4/M4A1 (Figure 2)

The M16A2/M16A4 and M4/M4A1 have a one turn in seven inch rifling twist and work best with the M855 (ball) and M856 (tracer) cartridges. If you shoot the M193 or M196 cartridges, your effective range is reduced 16 percent. M855 cartridges have a green tip and M856s have an orange tip.

M249

The M249 also works best with the M855 and M856 cartridges. If you shoot M193 and M196 cartridges, the M249's effective range is reduced from 1,000 meters to 500.

Ammunition information notice (AIN) 88-06 gives the lowdown on 5.56mm ammo. You can find the AIN online at <https://aeps2.ria.army.mil/commodity/ain/jmc/06/ain88-06.html>.



Book Reviews



***The Cambodian Campaign: The 1970 Offensive and America's Vietnam War.* By John M. Shaw. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2005, 222 pages, \$34.95. Reviewed by Brigadier General (Retired) Curtis H. O'Sullivan.**

The total Vietnam War has received a surfeit of attention, but the Cambodian Campaign has gotten surprisingly little coverage. This was an initial test of Vietnamization in 1970 with the hope of a dignified withdrawal of U.S. ground forces. The author, John M. Shaw, claims it was one of the most successful operations of the entire war, but that doesn't erase the final, ignominious withdrawal a few years later.

The events of Tet in 1968 allowed GEN Creighton Abrams to fight a different war than had GEN William Westmoreland. A decision was made to withdraw U.S. ground forces safely and gracefully. To this end, the Cambodian flank had to be neutralized. The mission was given to II Field Force Vietnam under the command of LTG Michael S. Davison. Because of the ultimate defeat in Vietnam, this successful campaign is too often discounted. In addition, the invasion of a "neutral" nation was not widely publicized. It's become popular to trash President Nixon because of later events, but here he made a bold and sound move, recognizing that the four separate states of Indo-China formed a single theater. Hanoi had done this from the start.

The book started as a doctoral dissertation but broke out of the constraints of academe with revisions and updates to become a very readable work. Shaw served as speech-writer to the Secretary of the Army and obviously has a gift with words. To a Soldier, it is a pleasure to have the details and rationale for force structure and the capabilities of key equipment. Mistakes are not glossed over and unpleasant things, such as relief from command, not ignored. Shaw brings out the ridiculous consequences of a rigid application of one-year tours of duty. It speaks well of the durability of our system that no serious damage ensued.

Eight maps are more than usual for a book of this size but could have been better designed

to make their points. The photographs are action shots and well above the usual stiff, posed group pictures. Having served in the 45th Division at the same time as Mike Davison and under him in the G-3 section of VI Corps, I'm a little dubious about the statement about his relation with Abe during WWII. The bibliography is impressive. Extensive use is made of interviews and correspondence with key players and selective use of the vast written material.

This is a good book for anyone anxious for a rounded picture of the conflict in Vietnam. It is short but boiled down to the essentials. You may have to ponder over the maps, but it's worth the effort.

***The Prince: The Secret Story of the World's Most Intriguing Royal, Prince Bandar Bin Sultan.* By William Simpson. New York: Regan Books, A Division of HarperCollins, 2006, 439 pages, \$32.50. Reviewed by Lieutenant Commander Youssef Aboul-Enein, USN.**

I must confess the flashy book cover led me to an initial prejudice that I was about to read another glorified biography of a world-famous Saudi Prince, but once I started reading what I found was quite surprising. The biography of Prince Bandar Bin Sultan, the long-serving Saudi Ambassador to the United States and current Secretary-General of the Saudi National Security Council, offered a serious look into the intricacies of U.S.-Saudi relations and stunning admissions by Prince Bandar on his role in acquiring long-range Chinese ballistic missiles for Saudi Arabia. William Simpson is a long-time friend of Prince Bandar, having trained together as flight cadets. The biography was conducted under the auspices of the prince. Readers are taken from his relatively disadvantaged birth, in terms of the royal family, to how Prince Bandar carved himself his own niche within the Saudi royal family, first as a

fighter pilot, then a negotiator of arms deals to one of the most influential ambassadors in the history of Washington, D.C., politics. The section on the Chinese missile deal provides insight into the denial and deception techniques used by Prince Bandar and the Saudi government to keep the deal a secret from the United States. It involved going to China to buy weapon stockpiles earmarked for the Iranians fighting a brutal war against Iraq, with the real purpose to acquire Dong Feng-3 ballistic missiles.

As you read his biography, you cannot help but respect Prince Bandar's tireless schedule and he offers a Saudi perspective on the process of how the United States determines weapons sales to the Kingdom. It is important for readers to always keep in mind that Prince Bandar serves the interest of Saudi Arabia first and foremost, but that has not stopped him from looking for ways in which his country and the United States have converging interests. Prince Bandar has been instrumental in getting through some of the most important decisions from the Saudi Kingdom and offering the United States a conduit of communication for such regimes as Syria and even Saddam Hussein. The biography ends with Prince Bandar lamenting that he had spent 70 percent of his time on the Palestine issue and it would be wasted. He also is a realist when it comes to the late Yasser Arafat's inability to transition from revolutionary to statesmen, and retarding the progress towards a Palestinian state. The chapter on 9-11, offers a clear criticism of al-Qaida, their tactics and a candid discussion on the damage done by al-Qaida to Islam and his nation. The book is a true lesson in the mechanics of complex diplomacy and the value of an ambassador who tenaciously represents his nation's interests. Those with a deep interest in Middle East

affairs and finding ways of working with the Saudis in fighting al-Qaida and their affiliates may want to take time to peruse this biography.

***Historical Perspectives of the Operational Art.* By Michael D. Krause and R. Cody Phillips (eds.). Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 2005, 505 pages, \$41.** Reviewed by Brigadier General (Retired) Curtis H. O'Sullivan.

This is an anthology by historians illustrating the origin and development of the operational level of warfare. When I punched my ticket through the war colleges, I was still following the inherited wisdom that military art involved tactics and strategy. Some service schools (especially at the basic branch courses) covered small unit tactics (which implied there were large unit tactics). We also heard, along the line, of grand strategy — which suggested that it too had subdivisions. In recent years, I've been exposed to a new buzz term in the professional reviews and learned that it has been sanctified by inclusion in the Leavenworth Bible: FM 100-5, *Operations*. There was an apparent gap between the traditional understanding of tactics and strategy. Some tried to fill it with "grand" tactics or "applied," but something else seemed more definitive, more descriptive.

The 14 essays are broken down by four countries: two for France; three for Germany; four for Russia; and five for the United States. They cover not just battles or campaigns but also periods of intellectual ferment and development. They range from Napoleon at Jena in 1806 to Schwarzkopf during Desert Storm in 1991. Thus, theorists are included as warrior/practitioners.

Russell Weigley may be the only household name among the essayists, but all have respectable and pertinent qualifications for the task at hand. As with any anthology, there is a variation in the style and quality, but the total effort ties well together. It claims to be a "unique" study in the field of military history. That's a word that raises hackles, but here it's strictly accurate. It's not identical to any other work on the subject of which I'm aware.

The maps are well above the norm, and the tables are useful. This study covers only land warfare and, of necessity, gives only examples of the application of the operational art there. It's recommended to anyone with a serious interest in the development of the military profession.

***Pointe du Hoc.* By Peter Howard. Great Britain: Ian Allen Publishing, 2006, 96 pages, \$29.95.** Reviewed by Chris Timmers.

You won't read the following fact in many history books dealing with D-Day in World War II, but on June 6, 1944, an act of insubordination was committed on the part of LTC James Rudder, commander of the U.S. Army's 2nd Ranger Battalion. He defied his division commander and personally led 225 Rangers from the battalion's D, E, and F companies ashore at Pointe du Hoc. The Rangers were to scale 100 foot high cliffs with the mission of neutralizing five 155mm howitzers and eliminating any resistance. Their story, and the story of other Ranger units that saw action that day, is well told and illustrated in this slender, although fact filled, volume.

Just weeks after Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Roosevelt, mindful of the successes British Commandos had enjoyed, tasked his commanders to bring into existence a similar force of elite, highly mobile, and skilled infantry who could hit the enemy without notice, gather intelligence, and operate independently for extended periods of time. Roosevelt didn't like the name "Commando" for these new units, it sounded too British. So the name Rangers was resurrected from North American military history. And one of the best known Rangers, Robert Rogers, an early colonial soldier who fought for the British in the French and Indian War (1755-63) was the unit's early "founding father" and spiritual icon. He remains so to this day and since 1950, every young man entering the Army's Ranger School is given a card which lists Rogers Plan of Discipline, the first commandment of which is "Don't forget nothing."

The Rangers, under almost incredibly

difficult circumstances, finally made it to the top of Pointe du Hoc, only to find that firing positions had no active, firing howitzers; there were, however, two guns which the Germans had disabled. But the action didn't stop there: they faced repeated counter attacks from the soldiers who had opposed their climb and withering fire from enemy anti-aircraft guns. The 2nd Ranger Battalion was to be relieved, according to plan, later that day on June 6, but they had to hold out until June 8. By then the toll was plain to all. Of the 225 Rangers that had embarked on landing craft two days earlier, LTC Rudder now had only 90 combat effectives left. But the objective had been taken and a victory entered Ranger lore.

Perhaps the most interesting chapter is the last, wherein Howard updates the reader on the aftermath of the battle of Point du Hoc and what happened to the principal combatant Rangers. He gives a comprehensive rundown on the main Ranger officers and NCOs at the battle and tells of their lives after this pivotal battle. What is especially moving is an extract from President Reagan's speech at Pointe du Hoc on June 6, 1984, the 40th anniversary of D-Day and the Rangers' famous assault. Even this brief excerpt will cause a certain tightening in the throat of those of us who still revere these Soldiers as part of "The Greatest Generation."

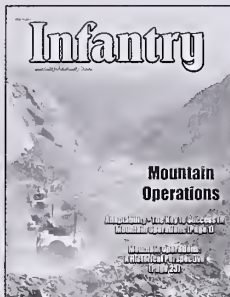
Let the reader beware, however. There are some small, very small, inaccuracies. On a page showing allied weapons, the air-cooled M2 .50 caliber machine gun is misidentified as the M1919A4 .30 caliber machine gun. At over 80 lbs, the .50 caliber is far too heavy for light infantry to carry and is typically used on armored vehicles or in static defensive positions. It is still in service as of this writing. Also, Howard refers to U.S. air support for the D-Day landing coming from the USAF — but the USAF (United States Air Force) did not come into being until 1947, well after WWII. American air support came from the U.S. Army Air Force, or USAAF, when the Army controlled all non-Naval aviation assets. But these errors are trivial. Howard gets the main facts straight and tells the story of Pointe du Hoc with an accuracy combined with suspense that makes actual history read better than fiction.

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SPC Shawn M. Cassatt

Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, take control of a bridge during a mission near Muqadadiyah, Iraq, December 19, 2007.

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